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Educators try to calm violence fears

As threats increase, officials in New Haven, Hamden, Norwich and Manchester look to reassure students, teachers and parents

By Daniela Altamari and Christine Dempsey
Hartford Courant

Educators in communities across the state are trying to quell the nerves of anxious students, teachers and parents in the face of threats of gun violence targeting schools.

On Monday, students at Wilbur Cross High School in New Haven were dismissed early after officials said they received a report of a person approaching the school

with a gun. The city's Hillhouse High School and Achievement First Amistad High School let out early due to threats posted on social media. Officials said they also learned of threats targeting other city schools.

Schools in Hamden, Norwich and Manchester are also monitoring threats in the wake of the mass shooting at a public high school in Michigan, in which four students were killed.

"At this time, we have not found that any of the threats are credible,"

New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker said at a Monday afternoon news conference.

But, Elicker added, "we take [threats] very seriously ... I want to be clear: when someone makes this kind of threat, it is illegal. You will be arrested, we will find you."

The spate of threats proliferating on social media has presented police and school officials with the challenge of assessing their seriousness and determining

Turn to Schools, Page 2



A makeshift memorial stands outside Oxford High School in Oxford, Mich. Educators in communities across Connecticut are trying to quell nerves in the wake of the fatal shootings in Oxford last week. **FILE**



New England's electric grid operator warned Monday that power outages are possible this winter if an extended cold snap grips the region and fuel supplies are pinched while demand soars. **MARK MIRKO/HARTFORD COURANT**

Power grid faces 'heightened risk'

New England system operator warns of outages if long cold snap hits

By Stephen Singer
Hartford Courant

New England's electric grid operator warned Monday that power outages are possible if an extended cold snap this winter grips the region and fuel supplies are pinched as demand spikes.

The president of ISO-New England said the region's grid is vulnerable to extreme weather just as utilities, generators, regulators and others who are responsible for keeping the electricity on are looking to move away from carbon-based fuel.

Natural gas pipeline constraints, global supply chain problems and even a short-

age of fuel delivery truck drivers on local roads place New England's power system at "heightened risk" heading into the winter, the Holyoke, Massachusetts-based organization said.

Utilities and generators will meet consumer demand if the winter is mild. The ISO cited an outlook by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of a warmer than average winter in New England.

But a severe and prolonged cold snap could require emergency actions if generators lack access to fuel, the ISO said.

Turn to Power, Page 3

"This problem is not going to go away. It's going to gradually get worse as a result of us needing to reduce the use of fossil fuels and because extreme weather, I think, is going to be a big variable in the equation."

— Gordon van Welie, president and chief executive officer of ISO-New England

Biden, Putin to discuss Ukraine

US strategy expected to have inducements, warnings for Russia

By David E. Sanger and Eric Schmitt
The New York Times

President Joe Biden is expected to offer a series of potential diplomatic off-ramps to Russian President Vladimir Putin in a video meeting Tuesday, but Biden will warn him that if he orders his forces to invade Ukraine, Western allies may move to cut Russia off from the international financial system, administration officials said.

The meeting, Biden's most critical — and most likely his highest-stakes — leader-to-leader conversation since he took office more than 10 months ago, may set the course for Ukraine's fate as a fully independent nation. In the month since Biden dispatched CIA Director William Burns to Moscow, Russian forces have encircled Ukraine on three sides and accelerated a cybercampaign and disinformation campaign to destabilize its government, according to American, European and intelligence officials.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss Tuesday's call.

Burns' warnings to the Russian leader appear to have been largely ignored, officials say. The official U.S. assessment is still that Putin has not decided to conduct a full-scale invasion, officials say. But Putin and Biden, officials say, come to the conversation Tuesday, which both men signaled they wanted, with different agendas.

White House officials have been gaming out a series of scenarios with Biden, including that the Russian president comes with a series of demands

Turn to Ukraine, Page 2

Health officials, politicians promote COVID-19 boosters

As Connecticut faces a surge in COVID-19 cases and the omicron variant begins to emerge in the state, health officials and politicians on Monday urged residents to get vaccinated and boosted. **Connecticut, Page 1**

Opinion.....**News, 10**
Obituaries.....**News, 12-14**
Lottery.....**News, 2**
Classified.....**News, 11**
Puzzles.....**Connecticut, 7**
Comics...**Connecticut, 8-9**

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CORONAVIRUS IN CONNECTICUT

Hospitalizations at 500 for 1st time since April

Figure has more than doubled in past month

By Eliza Fawcett
Hartford Courant

Hospitalizations related to COVID-19 in Connecticut leapt to 500 individuals on Monday, straining some regional hospitals and reflecting the continued spread of the delta variant in the state.

The number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 has more than doubled in the past month, according to state data. Currently, 91% of the hospital beds in New Haven

County are full, president and CEO of Griffin Hospital Patrick A. Charnel said during a press conference at New Haven Union Station championing booster shots.

"There are only 200 beds left to be filled," Charnel said. "We need folks to go out and protect themselves, because they are protecting the community, but they're also preserving our capacity to take care of sick people."

At Yale New Haven Health, the number of patients with COVID-19 has doubled over the past five weeks, said chief clinical officer Dr. Tom Balcezak.

Across the health system, there

are currently 140 patients with COVID-19.

"These are cases that we would not normally have, and we don't have a lot of excess capacity to begin with," he said.

In Hartford County, Hartford HealthCare senior system director of infection prevention Keith Grant reported more than sufficient hospital capacity. But he said the statewide increase in hospitalizations made sense given the increase in indoor gatherings during colder weather.

"This is not inconsistent with what we expect will happen, considering the delta variant,

people going inside, the holiday season, shopping," he said.

Public health officials emphasize that the vast majority of hospitalizations due to COVID-19 are among unvaccinated residents.

"The bottom line is, the virus is among us — predominantly the delta variant, still," Connecticut Department of Public Health Commissioner Dr. Manisha Juthani said. "And this is resulting in hospitalizations in our state where 70-80% of people in the hospital are unvaccinated. The virus finds the unvaccinated."

Turn to COVID-19, Page 3

FROM PAGE ONE

Ukraine

from Page 1

that go well beyond the familiar one that Ukraine can never join NATO. They include a reorientation of Ukraine away from the West and back into Moscow’s orbit.

Biden must convince Putin that the administration’s commitment to Ukraine, which it has called “unshakable,” is deep enough to cause tremendous economic pain to Russia — even if, as both men know, American forces would not come directly to Ukraine’s aid. Under discussion are steps as extreme as cutting off Russia’s access to the international financial settlement system, called SWIFT, and a series of restrictions on its banks such as those honed in the effort to sanction Iran.

The off-ramps appear to be variations on the Minsk agreements, reached between Ukraine and Russia after the Crimea invasion — and largely ignored by the Russians since. Biden administration officials did not offer details of what kind of diplomatic process Biden will offer, but elements of that were hinted at by Secretary of State Antony Blinken last week in his visit to Europe, where he shared intelligence findings with NATO allies.

That effort appeared to begin to convince Germany, among others, that a clear warning to Putin was needed. Biden was



A customer shows traditional Russian wooden dolls of Russian President Vladimir Putin and U.S. President Joe Biden at a souvenir store in Moscow on Monday. PAVEL GOLOVKIN/AP

expected to speak with the leaders of Ukraine and several European allies Monday, before his call, in an effort to keep a unified front. But many European officials are clearly worried that Putin could respond to pressure by diminishing gas supplies to Europe as winter approaches.

Some administration officials believe that Putin views Biden as focused on COVID-19 at home

and China abroad, and that at a moment when Germany is changing leadership and France is facing an election, this is an opportune time to begin reconstituting pieces of the old Soviet Union. They are even concerned that he may try to use Belarus, whose leader appears increasingly aligned with Putin, as a pathway to move against Kyiv.

A declassified assessment disclosed by the Biden administra-

tion late last week, in an effort to shore up opposition inside Russia to Putin’s plans, suggested that by January he may have as many as 175,000 troops on the border — up from roughly 100,000 now. But some military and intelligence officials believe that the figure may go higher, as Putin distributes his forces in a way to suggest he could try a three-sided “pincer” invasion of the country.

In a briefing to reporters Monday, a senior administration official said there was still no evidence Putin had made a decision to invade. But the official, who spoke on background under rules set by the White House, said forces were already deployed in the northeast, the south and the west, in an effort that would put Putin in a position to move in quickly.

But other officials said they are already seeing heightened cyberaction, and some officials are recalling that Russia cut off the electric power to two parts of Ukraine in past years — and most likely had the capability for further disruptions now.

In the briefing for reporters, the senior administration official also said there had been a “significant spike in social media pushing Russian propaganda” that followed the pattern of Russian actions in 2014, just before the invasion and annexation of Crimea.

The Kremlin sees Ukrainians as “one people” with Russians, living in a failing state controlled by Western forces determined to divide and conquer the post-Soviet world.

Ukraine, by contrast, ousted a Russia-friendly president in 2014 and increasingly is in favor of binding the country to Western institutions.

Putin in recent days said Russia would demand “legal guarantees” that Ukraine would not host more Western forces.

Schools

from Page 1

whether to cancel class and close buildings. Given the history of violence on campuses, including last week’s Michigan attack, officials say they prefer to err on the side of caution.

But even those threats that aren’t credible can create stress, cause lost class time and divert police resources. The New Haven threats created “a significant amount of trauma in a community that is already quite traumatized,” Elicker said. “With everything going on these past two years, with the shooting incident in the school in Michigan, this is something that not only does our community not need, but it creates great harm.”

Hamden High School will be

closed until Wednesday because of an online threat, police said. The school, where a loaded gun was found two months ago, has been closed since Friday.

In Norwich, police were summoned to Norwich Free Academy Monday after security personnel were made aware of a possible threat from a student. The high school was placed on lockdown “out of an abundance of caution,” Norwich police said. Investigators said they found the person who made the alleged threat and are determining whether criminal charges are warranted.

School officials in Manchester are monitoring a possible threat after a Snapchat post stating “‘All y’all Mhs kids better watch out Monday” was reported.

The spike in school threats has also drawn scrutiny from the state Department of Emergency

Services and Public Protection, said Brian Foley, a spokesman for the law enforcement agency.

The department “is aware of the trending school threats around the country,” Foley said. “We have reached out to Municipal CEOs, emergency management directors and school district personnel across the state to provide assistance in managing these incidents. We continue to work closely with our local, state and federal partners through the investigations.”

Superintendents across the state are “incredibly concerned,” said Fran Rabinowitz, executive director of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents. “No superintendent wants to close a school,” she said. “But if there is a threat, we don’t have a choice.”

Kate Dias, president of the Connecticut Education Association, the state’s largest teacher

union, said officials can’t take a chance when it comes to a threat involving violence.

“We have to take all of these issues incredibly seriously in light of what’s happening across the country,” Dias said. “The consequence of not doing that is really too dire.”

State Sen. Saud Anwar, a Democrat from South Windsor, said he views the threats as part of a larger crisis involving children’s mental health that has overwhelmed pediatric hospital emergency rooms and left parents searching for answers.

“The depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation of children hurting themselves is proportionally a far bigger issue than the threats of violence,” said Anwar, the co-chairman of the legislature’s committee on children.

Those mental health issues “are

far more likely at this time,” he added.

“Obviously, some of these lawbreaking activities are based in the mental health crisis that they’re dealing with,” Anwar added.

Dias, the teachers union president, said the pandemic and the shift back to in-person school has added considerable stress to students who have been attending classes remotely or through a hybrid system for more than a year.

“We have a whole [bunch] of students who are out of practice and have a lot of students who returned a little more frustrated, agitated and scared,” Dias said. “There are a lot of challenges.”

Rabinowitz agreed. “There’s grief, there’s anger, there’s loss ... communities are trying to reconcile those feelings and our students are feeling the same.”

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LOTTERY

Monday, Dec. 6

PLAY3 DAY

6 3 0 WB: 3

PLAY4 DAY

4 5 9 9 WB: 6

The late numbers were not drawn in time for this edition. For results, please visit courant.com/lottery.

SUNDAY'S LATE NUMBERS

PLAY3 NIGHT

7 6 3 WB: 8

PLAY4 NIGHT

0 1 4 6 WB: 7

CASH 5

4 14 17 27 34

LUCKY FOR LIFE

7 14 18 19 41 LB: 7







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FROM PAGE ONE

Father allegedly ‘whipped’ baby around

West Hartford man charged in infant daughter’s death

By **Seamus McAvoy**
Hartford Courant

The West Hartford man arrested Sunday in connection with the death of his infant daughter forcefully picked up the baby before “whipping” her around, resulting in multiple skull fractures, according to court documents.

Grant McAuslan, 34, was charged with first-degree manslaughter and risk of injury to a minor. He was in custody as of Sunday with an initial \$1.25 million surety bond.

Police received a report of a medical emergency at about 11:30 p.m. on Dec. 3. Responding officers discovered an infant who had suffered injuries reportedly from being dropped on her head, police said. Responding officers observed the infant was still breathing, according to the affidavit.

Police interviewed McAuslan and his wife, the infant’s mother, while emer-

gency responders tended to the infant. McAuslan initially told police that he accidentally dropped his daughter on her head, according to the affidavit. The name of McAuslan’s wife was not released.

McAuslan went on to tell police that he was woken up Friday night by his wife when their daughter began to stir so that they could feed her, according to the affidavit. McAuslan’s wife later said this was around 11 p.m.

McAuslan said he was sleeping in the bedroom of their other daughter, 2, while the infant victim was sleeping on a specialized infant bed on his and his wife’s bed.

McAuslan’s wife went downstairs to pump breast milk, McAuslan said, according to the affidavit, while he warmed up a bottle of breast milk upstairs. He told police he lifted his infant daughter out of the infant bed, but she slipped out of his arms and landed on the hardwood flooring next to the bed, according to the affidavit.

McAuslan rode with the

infant victim in an ambulance to Connecticut Children’s Medical Center. His wife stayed at their home with their 2-year-old daughter, according to the affidavit. Police noted in the affidavit that McAuslan’s wife’s parents were staying at their home but did not witness the incident.

McAuslan’s wife told the police who had stayed at the house that McAuslan appeared irritated about being woken up but still went to warm up their daughter’s milk, according to the affidavit. While she was downstairs, she heard a loud band and McAuslan yell out an expletive, according to the affidavit.

McAuslan’s wife rushed upstairs and McAuslan told her he had dropped their daughter, she told police, according to the affidavit. They told her parents what happened and called 911, she told police. She told police it was “definitely not” an intentional act by McAuslan.

Police noted a baby monitor in the area where the incident occurred, but it was not in use and was usually

used in the older child’s room, according to the affidavit.

McAuslan’s wife then left to go to the hospital to be with her infant daughter. Police decided to not hold the residence as a crime scene at the time, according to the affidavit.

At the hospital, McAuslan and his wife gave consistent retellings of the incident. Police noted in the affidavit that both were in tears at different points and appeared “incredibly upset.”

Hospital workers later told police that the infant victim’s condition had dramatically deteriorated, and that the baby was not on a ventilator system, according to the affidavit.

A resident doctor at the hospital told one officer that it was “highly unlikely” the severe injuries the infant suffered were from a drop of three or four feet, which is what McAuslan originally told police had occurred, according to the affidavit.

A social worker with the state Department of Children and Families arrived to the hospital overnight

and interviewed McAuslan and his wife, later reporting no noticeable differences in their stories and the one they told police, according to the affidavit.

On Saturday, Dec. 4, police met Dr. Nina Livingston, who leads CCMC’s Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect program, as well as with a social worker with the state Department of Children and Families. Livingston told police the “most likely diagnosis is abusive head trauma,” according to the affidavit, and that the infant’s injuries were inconsistent with a fall from the short height reported. According to the affidavit, Livingston also shared these findings with McAuslan and his wife.

Police again interviewed McAuslan’s wife at the hospital. She reiterated her belief that McAuslan did not intentionally injure their infant daughter, according to the affidavit.

McAuslan also repeated his story. As police were leaving the hospital, McAuslan requested to do the interview again and indicated there was more to his

story, according to the affidavit.

In the second interview, McAuslan said he had underplayed the force with which he lifted his daughter from the infant bed, according to the affidavit. McAuslan told police he quickly turned as he grabbed his daughter as he lifted her, “essentially “whipping” her around,” causing her to fall quickly to the floor, according to the affidavit. He said this was not intentional, but admitted to causing the hard fall.

The infant was pronounced dead later Saturday at about 7:30 p.m. Livingston later revealed the findings of a post-mortem skeletal survey performed on the infant, which found extensive head injuries including multiple skull fractures and extensive hemorrhages. Livingston told police the injuries have “a high specificity for abusive head trauma not expected from short free fall.”

Police were granted a warrant for McAuslan’s arrest and took him into custody on Sunday.

Power

from Page 1

“The almost 15 million people that live in this region need to understand that we are in a precarious position when it gets into extended extreme weather, particularly cold weather,” Gordon van Welie, president and chief executive officer of the ISO, told reporters at a news conference. “This problem is not going to go away. It’s going to gradually get worse as a result of us needing to reduce the use of fossil fuels and because extreme weather, I think, is going to be a big variable in the equation.”

The ISO cited three risks in particular: a prolonged period of extreme cold, the global price of oil and liquefied natural gas that could affect storage and deliveries into New England and pipeline constraints as demand spikes simultaneously from heating customers and electricity generators.

Van Welie cited a local threat to sufficient fuel supplies: a shortage of truck drivers that would affect deliveries of home heating oil that also serves as light fuel oil used as a backup source by generators.

If the risks materialize and threaten the reliability of New England’s power system, the ISO said it will turn to several operating procedures to manage the grid, “up to and including controlled power outages.”

Outages are a “last resort,” the ISO said. It wants to “educate the public that if this step were required, it would be used to protect the region’s power grid from an overall collapse.”

Peter T. Brandien, vice president of system operations and market administration, said the ISO will urge conservation, asking customers to turn down the thermostat, use appliances less frequently and minimize cooking.

The ISO also will



A Hartford resident begins to dig out after a snowstorm. **COURANT FILE PHOTO**

approach commercial and industrial consumers to throttle down their power use.

“I don’t want to go to Hartford or Boston or something and see all the buildings all lit up at a time that we’re asking for conservation, particularly with everybody working remotely from home,” Brandien said.

Dan Dolan, president of the New England Power Generators Association, said in an interview the region’s grid “overall has not planned for those black swan, truly extreme events.”

“Yet we’re able to weather some pretty extreme events,” he said. “There is the expectation there’s more than adequate supply going into the winter, but extreme events happen and there’s no guaranteed outcome.”

Van Welie said the ISO changed the way it communicates with the public following the winter of 2017-2018 when the average temperature was below normal in all major New England cities for at least 13 consecutive days despite a forecast of a mild winter.

“There were many sleepless nights during that two-week period... because we realized we were getting

close to the edge. But we didn’t have an effective way to communicate on how close we were and we didn’t want to panic people,” he said. “As luck would have it we made it through to the following week when the weather broke and the supply chain could catch up with us.”

“Given how close we came to being literally within two days of an energy deficiency within the region we said never again will we want to communicate that way,” he said.

The ISO has since developed a 21-day forecast and New England has benefited from mild winters since 2017-2018, van Welie said.

However, another, more distant event had an impact in New England. The grid failure in Texas in February following a winter storm that left hundreds of people dead prompted the ISO to begin “communicating more openly about these risks,” he said.

“What happened in Texas changed everything,” van Welie said. “We’ve not rested well since the February event and the realization that we know that we’re operating close to the edge here in the wintertime in particular in New England. We’ve known that for a long

time.”

ISO’s warnings are the most recent about sharply rising energy prices. Ever-source Energy advised the public Nov. 3 that natural gas heating prices could jump 14%, costing an average \$30 a month more than last year.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration said in November its short-term energy outlook “remains subject to heightened levels of uncertainty related to the ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The price of natural gas, which comprises most of the energy generated in New England, averaged \$5.51 per million British thermal units in October, up from the September average of \$5.16 and an average of \$3.25 in the first half of 2021, an increase of nearly 70%.

Despite the warning of what’s possible in the next few months, van Welie said ISO is “not trying to cause undue alarm.”

“But we need people to understand how vulnerable it can be under the wrong set of conditions and that this region hasn’t yet solved this problem,” he said.

Stephen Singer can be reached at ssinger@courant.com.

State high court settles dispute among heirs

A bequest for quadriplegic research split siblings in line for baking powder fortune

By **Edmund H. Mahony**
Hartford Courant

The state Supreme Court has settled a dispute over money among the heirs to a multibillion dollar baking powder fortune that threatened an enormous charitable donation intended to fund research for the benefit of quadriplegics.

The dispute was among the six great grandchildren of William Ziegler, a one-time pharmacy clerk whose turn of the century consolidation of baking powder factories has grown into what Forbes Magazine estimated in 2015 is a \$2.8 billion financial engine divided mostly between the international cigar distributor Swisher, Inc. and what the court describes as a substantial investment portfolio.

The six inherited equal shares of the family’s Darien-based businesses through an array of trusts created by their father, William Ziegler III. The disagreement ensued after one of the siblings, Peter Ziegler, suffered a tragic accident at age 58 at his Darien home in 2015, severing his spinal cord in a fall and becoming paralyzed below the neck.

After the accident, Peter Ziegler created a will that dictated the sale of his share of the family fortune and directed it to a trust of his own creation, Peter’s Yellow Submarine Trust, the mission of which was to assist other quadriplegics with housing and assistive

devices, pay for caregivers and fund research.

Four of Peter’s siblings supported his instructions. A sister, Helen Z. Benjamin, opposed it, leading to years of pricey litigation involving two dozen litigants.

In a decision released Monday the state Supreme Court rejected Benjamin’s challenge, allowing the sale of Peter Ziegler’s fortune to proceed.

None of the participants or their lawyers would discuss the case. Little became public about the wealth of the individual siblings. But when they collaborated in 2018 to sell the family home — a 1905 estate on a 63-acre island off Darien, with boathouses and an equestrian center — they asked \$125 million. The home was a base of operations for the original William Ziegler, known as a yachtsman and for organizing Arctic expeditions.

Legal papers indicate that the siblings held equal shares in the business and the value of Peter Ziegler’s portion was about \$184 million. For him to make his charitable bequest, his siblings had to combine to buy his share. The sale went through, but with the caveat that, if Benjamin prevailed in the litigation, Peter Ziegler’s bequest to the Yellow Submarine Trust would revert to the family business.

Benjamin challenged Peter Ziegler’s right under the trusts to make his bequest. The Supreme Court rejected her argument.

COVID-19

from Page 1

New cases, test positivity rate

Connecticut on Monday reported 5,481 new COVID-19 cases out of 94,544 tests administered, for a daily test positivity rate of 5.8%. The state’s weekly positivity rate now also stands at 5.8%, the highest it has been since mid-January.

All eight Connecticut counties — as well as the rest of those in the Northeast region — are currently recording “high” levels of COVID-19 transmission as defined by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. With this level of transmission, the CDC advises people to wear a mask in public indoor settings.

Juthani noted that COVID-19 transmission is accelerating in Connecticut, with the vast majority of

towns reaching a “red alert” designation.

“Over the last month, we saw Connecticut go from ... originally 31 towns that were red, that then went to about 67 towns that were red, to 101 towns, to 137 towns,” she said.

Hospitalizations

As of Monday, there were 500 patients in Connecticut hospitalized with COVID-19, an increase of 80 individuals since Friday. It has been

about eight months since hospitalizations last reached the 500-person mark.

Hospital officials say the vast majority of those hospitalized with serious COVID-19 symptoms are unvaccinated.

Deaths

Connecticut reports additional COVID-19 deaths once a week, on Thursdays. Last Thursday, the state reported 44 additional

COVID-19 deaths over the past eight days, bringing its total during the pandemic to 8,909.

The United States has now recorded 785,916 deaths related to COVID-19, according to the Coronavirus Resource Center at Johns Hopkins University.

Vaccinations

As of Monday, 85% of all Connecticut residents and 95.2% of those 12 and older

had received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, while 72.8% of all residents and 82.8% of those 12 and older were fully vaccinated, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Additionally, 29.2% of fully vaccinated Connecticut residents 18 or older have received a booster dose.

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Ousted Suu Kyi faces years in prison

Myanmar conviction a blow to democracy months after coup

By Grant Peck
Associated Press

BANGKOK — Aung San Suu Kyi, the civilian leader of Myanmar who was ousted in a de facto coup this year, was convicted on two charges Monday and handed a four-year sentence that was quickly cut in half — in proceedings widely criticized as a further effort by the country’s military rulers to roll back the democratic gains of recent years.

The verdict — on charges of incitement and violating coronavirus restrictions — serves to cement a reversal of fortunes for the Nobel Peace laureate, who spent 15 years under house arrest for resisting the Southeast Asian nation’s generals but then agreed to work alongside them when they promised to usher in democratic rule.

The case is only the first in a series brought against Suu Kyi, 76, since her arrest Feb. 1 — the day the army seized power, claiming massive voting fraud in last year’s election. Suu Kyi’s National League for Democracy party won that vote in a landslide, and independent election observers did not detect any major irregularities.

Just as the takeover has been met with fierce resistance, so too was the verdict, including a protest in the central city of Mandalay, where demonstrators chanted slogans and sang songs popularized during pro-democracy protests in 1988.

They also took to social media.



An anti-coup protester holds up a placard featuring Aung San Suu Kyi earlier this year in Yangon, Myanmar. **HKUN LAT/GETTY**

Htoo Ko, a doctor and travel blogger who is also an activist, wrote: “They have expended their maximum effort in carrying out evil. The people will be free only if we win the revolution, so work harder for the revolution.”

The cases against Suu Kyi are seen as contrived to discredit her and keep her from running in the next election — and many in the international community decried Monday’s verdict as a farce. If found guilty of all the charges she faces, Suu Kyi could be sentenced to more than 100 years in prison. She is being held by the military at an unknown location — and state televi-

sion reported that she would serve her sentence there.

That sentence was reduced hours after it was handed down in what the report said was an amnesty ordered by the country’s military leader, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing.

Suu Kyi is widely revered at home for her role in the country’s pro-democracy movement — and was long viewed abroad as an icon of that struggle, epitomized by her 15 years under house arrest. But since her release in 2010, she has been criticized for the gamble she made: showing deference to the military while ignoring and, at times, even defending rights violations — most

notably a 2017 crackdown on Rohingya Muslims that rights groups have labeled genocide.

While she has disputed allegations that army personnel killed Rohingya civilians, torched houses and raped women, that stance has tarnished her reputation abroad.

The incitement charge Suu Kyi faced centered on statements posted on her party’s Facebook page after she and other party leaders were detained by the military. She was accused of spreading false or inflammatory information that could disturb public order. In addition, she faced a charge of violating coro-

navirus restrictions for her appearance at a campaign event ahead of the elections last year.

Dr. Sasa, spokesperson for the National Unity Government, an opposition group that has declared itself the country’s shadow administration, called the verdict “a shameful day for the rule of law, justice and accountability in Myanmar” and said it represented an effort to “replace our dreams with military dictatorship forever.” He uses only one name.

U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet called the proceedings a “sham trial,” while Phil Robertson, deputy Asia

director for Human Rights Watch, said it was the beginning of a process that “will most likely ensure that Suu Kyi is never allowed to be a free woman again.”

The United States joined others in calling for her release.

“The regime’s continued disregard for the rule of law and its widespread use of violence against the Burmese people underscore the urgency of restoring Burma’s path to democracy,” Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement, using a former name for Myanmar.

China, a neighbor that has maintained friendly ties with Myanmar’s military leaders, declined to criticize the verdict but urged all parties to work together to continue the democratic transition.

Suu Kyi’s trials are closed to the media and spectators, and her lawyers, who had been a source of information on the proceedings, were served with gag orders in October forbidding them from releasing information. As a result, Monday’s verdict was initially relayed to The Associated Press by a legal official who insisted on anonymity for fear of being punished by authorities.

Defense lawyers are expected to file appeals for Suu Kyi and two colleagues who were also convicted Monday, the legal official said. They have argued that Suu Kyi and a co-defendant, former President Win Myint, could not be held responsible for the statements on which the incitement charge was based because they were in detention.

Win Myint’s sentence was also reduced.

NYC mayor makes push to stop next virus surge

De Blasio announces vaccine mandate for all private employers

By Michelle L. Price,
Bobby Caina Calvan
and Karen Matthews
Associated Press

NEW YORK — From Wall Street banks to corner grocery stores, all private employers in New York City will have to require their workers to get vaccinated against COVID-19, the mayor announced Monday in the most sweeping vaccine mandate of any state or big city in the country.

The move by Mayor Bill de Blasio comes as cases are climbing again in the U.S. and the worrisome but little-understood omicron variant is gaining a toehold in the nation’s largest city and elsewhere around the country.

“We in New York City have decided to use a preemptive strike to really do something bold to stop the further growth of COVID and the dangers it’s causing to all of us,” he said.

De Blasio, a Democrat with just weeks left in office, said the mandate will take effect Dec. 27, with in-person workers needing to provide proof they have received at

least one dose of the vaccine. And they will not be allowed to get out of the requirement by agreeing to regular COVID-19 testing instead.

The measure will apply to 184,000 businesses not covered by previous vaccine mandates, ranging from multinational corporations to mom-and-pop businesses in the city of 8.8 million people, according to a spokesperson for the mayor. The city’s private-sector workforce is 3.7 million.

Also, anyone 12 or older who wants to dine indoors at a restaurant, go to a gym or see a show will have to produce proof of having received two shots of the vaccine, up from the current requirement of one dose, the mayor said.

Children 5 to 11 will have to show proof of at least one shot.

De Blasio said the moves are aimed at staving off a spike of infections amid holiday gatherings and the cold weather, which drives more people indoors, where the virus can spread more easily.

Phil Penta, who runs a specialty grocery store called Three Guys from Brooklyn, said the impending mandate could put him in a bind by forcing him to fire valued employees who are holding out against the vaccine.

“Everybody wants to do the right thing, but the right thing is different for everybody,” said Penta, who said the vast majority of his three dozen employees have been vaccinated. “I respect the right to say they don’t want to take it.”

Vaccine rules across states and cities vary widely, with some states resisting any mandates and others requiring the shots for government employees or certain sectors that run a particularly high risk such as health care workers.

But no state has announced a broad private-sector mandate like New York City’s, according to data compiled by the nonpartisan National Academy for State Health Policy.

President Joe Biden sought to impose a less far-reaching mandate nationally, requiring employees of businesses with 100 or more workers to either get vaccinated or undergo regular testing. But federal courts have blocked that plan for now ahead of the Jan. 4 deadline.

De Blasio said he expects his mandate to survive any legal challenges. Employees will be able to ask for religious or medical exemptions.

The mayor said he



People wait for a COVID-19 vaccination at a mobile clinic Monday in Manhattan. Mayor Bill de Blasio says private employers will have to require workers be vaccinated. **MARY ALTAFFER/AP**

will release more details next week about how the mandate will be enforced.

About 5.9 million adults in New York City have gotten at least a first dose, out of 7 million people age 18 and up. That translates to 84%. About 5.8 million New Yorkers of all ages are fully vaccinated.

Cases of the omicron variant have been reported in about one-third of the states, but scientists cannot say for certain yet whether it is more dangerous than

previous versions.

U.S. health experts have strongly urged people to get their shots and a booster, saying they believe the vaccine will still offer protection against the new variant.

The delta variant still accounts for practically all infections in the U.S., and a rise in cases in recent weeks has swamped hospitals, especially in the Midwest and New England.

New York City is averaging just under 2,000 new

cases of COVID-19 per day, up from about 820 a day at the start of November.

“Vaccination is the central weapon in this war against COVID. It’s the one thing that has worked every single time across the board,” de Blasio said at a virtual news conference.

“A lot of folks to me in the private sector have said to me they believe in vaccination, but they’re not quite sure how they can do it themselves,” he continued. “Well, we’re going to do it.”



A group gets emotional after leaving flowers at a memorial at an entrance to Oxford High School on Wednesday. A shooting at the school left four students dead. **RYAN GARZA/TNS**

Prosecutor: School officials could face charges

Associated Press

OXFORD TOWNSHIP, Mich. — The prosecutor overseeing the case against the student accused in last week’s deadly Michigan school shooting and who took the rare step of charging his parents left open the possibility Monday that school officials could also face charges, saying “in this case, a lot could have been done different.”

Oakland County Prosecutor Karen McDonald said

the investigation’s findings will determine whether school officials will be charged in the Nov. 30 attack at Oxford High School.

But she noted that three hours before Ethan Crumbley, 15, allegedly opened fire, killing four fellow students and wounding six others and a teacher, the sophomore was sent back to class after a meeting between school counselors and his parents over a drawing a teacher found on his desk that included a bullet and

the words “blood everywhere.”

“In this case a lot could have been done different. I mean at that meeting he was allowed to go back to school,” she said Monday on ABC’s “Good Morning America.” “We know that he either had that weapon with him or somewhere where he could have stored it in the school. But he had it in the school, there’s no question.”

McDonald said that Crumbley’s parents — James Crumbley and Jenni-

fer Crumbley — did not mention at the school meeting that Ethan had access to a pistol. Authorities say he used the gun to carry out the attack and that his father bought it for him at a local gun shop Nov. 26 as an early Christmas gift.

Although the gun was legally sold to James Crumbley, minors in Michigan cannot possess guns aside from limited situations, such as when hunting with an adult. The parents were taken into custody Saturday.

WORLD & NATION

NEWS BRIEFING

Biden touts savings on insulin and other drugs for Americans

From news services

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden pledged Monday that his social agenda legislation would deliver tangible savings on prescription drugs for all Americans. Relief that consumers have clamored for is now in sight, he asserted.

But first the bill has to pass Congress, where plenty of obstacles remain in its path.

Biden tried to shift the focus to pocketbook provisions overlooked in the political machinations over his \$2 trillion legislation, which deals with issues from climate to family life and taxes. Even before concerns over rising inflation, polls consistently showed support from Americans across the political spectrum for government action to lower drug costs.

“It’s safe to say that all of us can agree that prescription drugs are outrageously expensive in this country,” Biden said at the White House.

“I’m committed to using every tool I have to lower prescription drug costs for Americans consistent with the drug companies getting a fair return on their investment,” he added.

But even if Biden and his fellow Democrats succeed in their final push to pass the legislation, a major political difficulty awaits them: Dividends from their prescription drug provisions won’t show up right away, while the pain of rising costs is real and present. Democrats will have to point to promised, not actual, savings in next year’s midterm elections.

The biggest policy change — a system for Medicare to negotiate prices for prescription drugs — won’t begin to deliver lower costs until 2025, and then only for a selected set of 10

medicines, as well as insulin products. The number of drugs subject to negotiations would build with time, reaching 100 in six years and continuing to grow by 20 a year.

Other provisions would take effect earlier.

Wisconsin Republicans: A group formed to support former President Donald Trump’s agenda is working with Wisconsin Republicans on a ballot measure that would bypass the state’s Democratic governor to change how elections are run in the battleground state.

The effort represents a new escalation in the ongoing Republican campaign to alter voting laws in response to Trump’s false claims of widespread fraud in the 2020 election. It comes as Wisconsin has become the epicenter of this year’s voting wars, with Republicans trying to dismantle the election system they themselves put in place several years ago — and figure out how to do that with a Democratic governor still in office.

The backing for a possible route around Gov. Tony Evers was revealed during a private meeting on elections hosted by the American Legislative Exchange Council, which advocates conservative policies to state lawmakers in voting and other areas. Trump’s former White House spokesman Hogan Gidley told attendees that his new organization, the Center for Election Integrity, was working with elected officials and business leaders in Wisconsin “to figure out the best path” around Evers, who has said he will block GOP-backed election measures.

Georgia governor: Former U.S. Sen. David Perdue will challenge Georgia Gov.



Rescuers help survivors evacuate Sumber Wuluh village in Lumajang on Monday after a volcanic eruption from Mount Semeru that killed at least 14 people. Mount Semeru in Lumajang district in East Java province, Indonesia, spewed thick columns of ash as high as 40,000 feet into the sky in a sudden eruption Saturday triggered by heavy rain. **JUNI KRISWANTO/GETTY-AFP**

Brian Kemp for governor, he announced Monday, setting up a bitter 2022 Republican primary fight while Democrat Stacey Abrams is likely to await the winner. Perdue had been flirting with the bid for months, encouraged publicly by former President Donald Trump. The 71-year-old former senator said he was running to stop Abrams from becoming governor and claimed Kemp would lose to her in November because some hard-core Trump Republicans oppose Kemp.

“To fight back, we simply have to be united,” Perdue said. “Look, I like Brian. This isn’t personal. It’s simple: He has failed all of us and cannot win in November.”

Hostages in Haiti: A religious group based in Berlin, Ohio, announced Monday that a gang in Haiti has released three more hostages, while another 12 remain abducted.

The statement from Christian Aid Ministries said the people were released Sunday in Haiti and are “safe

and seem to be in good spirits.” The group provided no further details.

On Nov. 21, the religious organization announced that the 400 Mawozo gang had released the first two hostages of a group of 17 kidnapped in mid-October. There are 12 adults and five children in the group of 16 U.S. citizens and one Canadian.

Honor for Dole: Former Sen. Bob Dole’s casket will lie in state in the U.S. Capitol on Thursday as congressional leaders honor the former Republican presidential candidate and World War II veteran who served in Congress for 36 years.

Dole died Sunday at the age of 98. He was a leader known for his caustic wit, which he often turned on himself but didn’t hesitate to turn on others, too. He shaped tax and foreign policy and worked vigorously to help the disabled, enshrining protections against discrimination in employment, education and

public services in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The U.S. Capitol has been considered the most suitable place for the nation to pay final tribute to its most eminent citizens by having their remains lie in state. The commemoration will include a formal arrival and departure ceremony.

Israel cyber exports: Israel’s Defense Ministry on Monday announced that it was tightening supervision over cyber exports — a move that follows a series of scandals involving Israeli spyware company NSO Group.

The ministry said the countries purchasing Israeli cyber technology would have to sign a declaration pledging to use the products “for the investigation and prevention of terrorist acts and serious crimes only.”

It said countries that violate the terms of use could be subject to sanctions, “including limiting the cyber system and/or disconnecting it.”

The announcement made no mention of NSO. But it came just days after it was revealed that 11 U.S. State Department employees were hacked with NSO spyware.

Devin Nunes: California Republican Rep. Devin Nunes, who was one of former President Donald Trump’s most devoted loyalists in Congress, is leaving the House at the end of this year to join Trump’s fledgling media company.

A statement Monday from the Trump Media & Technology Group said Nunes would serve as chief executive officer, beginning in January 2022. The company is preparing to launch a social media platform intended to rival Twitter, which blocked Trump’s account in January following the deadly storming of the U.S. Capitol.

Nunes said in a statement: “The time has come to reopen the Internet and allow for the free flow of ideas and expression without censorship.”

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WORLD & NATION

Racism haunts military academies

Discrimination lingers despite diversity gains

By Aaron Morrison, Helen Wieffering and Noreen Nasir Associated Press

Eight years after he graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Geoffrey Easterling remains astonished by the Confederate history — the six-foot-tall painting of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee in the library, the barracks dormitory named for Lee and the Lee Gate on Lee Road.

As a Black student at the Army academy, he remembers feeling “devastated” when a classmate pointed out the slave also depicted in the Lee painting. “How did the only Black person who got on a wall in this entire humongous school — how is it a slave?” he recalls thinking.

As a diversity admissions officer, he later traveled the country recruiting students to West Point from under-represented communities. “It was so hard to tell people like, ‘Yeah, you can trust the military,’ and then their kids Google and go ‘Why is there a barracks named after Lee?’” he said.

The nation’s military academies provide a key pipeline into the leadership of the armed services and, for the better part of the last decade, they have welcomed more racially diverse students each year. But beyond blanket anti-discrimination policies, these federally funded institutions volunteer little about how they screen for extremist or hateful behavior, or address the racial slights that some graduates of color say they faced daily.

In an Associated Press story earlier this year, current and former enlistees and officers in nearly



West Point cadets are taught that Confederate soldiers were no heroes, yet the references to Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, who graduated from the academy and is seen above in a painting at its museum, remain. **EDUARDO MUNOZ ALVAREZ/AP**

every branch of the armed services described a deep-rooted culture of racism and discrimination that stubbornly festers, despite repeated efforts to eradicate it. Less attention has been paid to the premiere institutions that produce a significant portion of the services’ officer corps — the academies of the U.S. Army, the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Air Force, the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Merchant Marine.

Some graduates of color from the nation’s top military schools who endured what they describe as a hostile environment are left questioning the military maxim that all service members wearing the same uniform are equal.

That includes Carlton Shelley II, who was recruited to play football for West Point from his Sarasota, Florida, high school and entered the academy in 2009. On the field, he described the team as “a

brotherhood,” where his skin color didn’t matter. But off the field, he said, he and other Black classmates too often were treated like the stereotype of the angry Black man.

Some students of color have spotlighted what they see as systemic discrimination at the academies by creating Instagram accounts — “Black at West Point,” “Black at USAFA” and “Black at USNA” — to relate their personal experiences.

In response to the AP’s findings, a spokesman for the Department of Defense, Maj. Charlie Dietz, said the academies make it a policy to offer equal opportunities regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity or sexual orientation. He said the DOD formed a team in April to advance progress on diversity, equity and inclusion across the entire department, including the academies.

The latest annual defense spending bill mandated that the Defense Department survey all its military properties for references or symbols that potentially commemorate the Confederacy, including at West Point, which the commission overseeing the work picked as its first site to visit earlier this year. But the deadline to act on any recommendations is still more than two years away.

Shelley said the academy has significant work to do to retain and support students of color. In his class, he estimated about 35 Black students graduated — “some crazy low number,” he said. “And we started with a lot more.”

West Point did not respond to requests for comment, beyond reiterating the importance of diversity to its admissions process.

The academies are a growing pathway to officer

status for Black cadets, 2019 data from the Under Secretary of Defense show, with about 13% of Black active-duty officers commissioned through the five institutions, compared to 19% of white active-duty officers.

Most students who enroll — about 60% to 70% — are nominated by U.S. senators or representatives from their home states as part of a system created in the 1840s to build a geographically diverse officer corps. But today, the country’s changed demographics mean the system gives disproportionate influence to rural congressional districts that tend to be whiter.

Only 6% of nominations to the Army, Air Force and Naval academies made by the current members of Congress went to Black candidates, even though 15% of the population ages 18 to 24 is Black, according to a March report by the Connecticut Veterans’ Legal

Center. Eight percent of congressional nominations went to Hispanic students, though they make up 22% of young adults, the report said.

The diversity of nominations has improved slightly in the past 25 years, but the report noted that 49 Congress members did not nominate a single Black student while in office and 31 nominated no Hispanic candidates.

According to data supplied to the AP by the four schools, the Naval, Air Force, Merchant Marine and Coast Guard academies have generally become less white over the past two decades. West Point did not provide full data, but said it is increasingly welcoming diverse students, with 37% of the class of 2024 identifying as nonwhite, compared to about 25% a decade ago.

While the number of Hispanic cadets increased in the past two decades at the Coast Guard and Naval academies, Black cadets showed no noticeable increase during that time.

In the class of 2000, there were 73 Black midshipmen in the Naval Academy and just 77 in 2020. At the Coast Guard Academy, there were 15 Black cadets in the 2001 class. And in 2021? Just 16.

Two of the five academies — West Point and the Air Force Academy — now have their first Black leaders. But Easterling, the West Point graduate, noted that the faculty there remains mostly white, meaning students who “don’t see themselves, and don’t want to stay” can find it hard to ask for help.

Greg Elliott said he often got in trouble while at the Merchant Marine Academy and was asked to leave. He said he didn’t face overt racism, but wonders if a more diverse faculty and student body could have made him feel he belonged.

He recalls a fellow Black alum telling him to just realize the academy was “a terrible place to be at, but it’s a great place to be from.”



Attorney General Merrick Garland and Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta held a news conference Monday to discuss the lawsuit against Texas. **ANNA MONEYMAKER/GETTY**

DOJ sues Texas over new redistricting maps, cites bias

By Acacia Coronado and Nicholas Riccardi Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — The Justice Department sued Texas over new redistricting maps Monday, saying the plans discriminate against the very Black and Latino voters who have fueled the state’s population boom.

The lawsuit, filed in the Western District of Texas, claims the Republican-controlled state violated part of the Voting Rights Act in drawing up new maps for its congressional delegation and state Legislature. The case is the first legal action challenging a state’s maps from the Biden Justice Department during this redistricting cycle.

The lawsuit notes that the vast majority of Texas’ population growth over the past decade came from Black, Latino and Asian people, but the new maps that state Republicans drew doesn’t give any of these communities new opportunities to choose their own representatives.

“This is not the first time that Texas has acted to minimize the voting rights

of its minority citizens,” Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta said during a news conference with Attorney General Merrick Garland.

The lawsuit cites several congressional districts where Republicans drew tortured lines to lower the share of Black and Latino voters in their party’s congressional districts.

In West Texas’ 23rd district, the map trimmed out areas near El Paso and San Antonio to lower the share of Latino voting-age residents by 9%. In the Dallas area it pulled Black and Latino residents of the northwest suburbs out of the district of Rep. Beth Van Duyne, who narrowly won her reelection bid against a Democratic Black Latina candidate last year. In the Houston area, where the share of the white population is dwindling, the map kept six of 10 House districts as white-majority or plurality districts.

Texas has had to defend their maps in court after every redistricting process since the Voting Rights Act took effect in 1965, but this will be the first since a 2013 U.S. Supreme Court

ruling gutted a provision of the Voting Rights Act that had required Texas and other states with a history of racial discrimination to have the Justice Department approve the maps.

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton condemned the litigation as an intrusion by the Democratic administration.

“The Department of Justice’s absurd lawsuit against our state is the Biden Administration’s latest ploy to control Texas voters,” Paton tweeted.

The lawsuit will also play out during a changed legal landscape for redistricting challenges.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2019 that it won’t referee partisan gerrymandering disputes — maps drawn to benefit a political party.

However, federal courts remain open to claims of racial gerrymandering. Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act prohibits mapmakers from diluting the voting power of minorities by scattering them among districts and preventing them from choosing their own candidates.

At 101, Pearl Harbor survivor returning to honor those lost

By Audrey McAvoy and Gillian Flaccus Associated Press

HONOLULU — When Japanese bombs began falling on Pearl Harbor, U.S. Navy Seaman 1st Class David Russell first sought refuge below deck on the USS Oklahoma.

But a split-second decision on that December morning 80 years ago changed his mind, and likely saved his life.

“They started closing that hatch. And I decided to get out of there,” Russell, now 101, said recently.

Within 12 minutes his battleship would capsize under a barrage of torpedoes. Altogether 429 sailors and Marines from the Oklahoma would die — the greatest death toll from any ship that day other than the USS Arizona, which lost 1,177.

Russell plans to return to Pearl Harbor on Tuesday for a ceremony in remembrance of the more than 2,300 American troops killed in the Dec. 7, 1941, attack that launched the U.S. into World War II.

About 30 survivors and 100 other veterans from the war are expected to observe a moment of silence at 7:55 a.m., the minute the attack began.

Survivors, now in their late 90s or older, stayed home last year due to the coronavirus pandemic and watched a livestream of the event instead.

Russell is traveling to Hawaii with the Best Defense Foundation, a nonprofit founded by former NFL Linebacker Donnie Edwards that helps World War II veterans revisit their old battlefields.

He recalls heading topside when the attack started because he was trained to lead anti-aircraft guns and figured he could help if any other loader got hurt.

But Japanese torpedo



David Russell, 101, reads a birthday card while talking about his time aboard the USS Oklahoma and his life after World War II last month in Albany, Oregon. **NATHAN HOWARD/AP**

planes dropped a series of underwater missiles that pummeled the Oklahoma before he could get there. Within 12 minutes, the battleship capsized.

“Those darn torpedoes, they just kept hitting us and kept hitting us. I thought they’d never stop,” Russell said. “That ship was dancing around.”

Russell clambered over and around toppled lockers while the battleship slowly rolled over.

Once he got to the main deck, he crawled over the ship’s side and eyed the USS Maryland moored next door. He didn’t want to swim because leaked oil was burning in the water below. Jumping, he caught a rope hanging from the Maryland and escaped to that battleship without injury.

He then helped pass ammunition to the Maryland’s anti-aircraft guns.

After the battle, Russell and two others went to Ford Island, next to where the battleships were moored, in search of a bathroom. A dispensary and enlisted quarters there had turned into a triage center and place of refuge for hundreds of wounded, and they found horribly burned sailors lining the walls. Many would die in the hours and days ahead.

Russell still thinks about

how lucky he was.

In the first two days after the bombing, a civilian crew from the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard rescued 32 men trapped inside the Oklahoma by cutting holes in its hull. But many others perished. Most of those who died were buried in anonymous Honolulu graves marked as “unknowns” because their remains were too degraded to be identified by the time they were removed from the ship between 1942 and 1944.

In 2015, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency exhumed 388 sets of these remains in hopes of identifying them with the help of DNA technology and dental records. They succeeded with 361.

Russell’s brother-in-law was among them. Fireman 1st Class Walter “Boone” Rogers was in the fireroom, which got hit by torpedoes, Russell said. The military identified his remains in 2017, and he’s since been reburied at Arlington National Cemetery.

Russell remained in the Navy until retiring in 1960. He worked at Air Force bases for the next two decades and retired for good in 1980.

His wife, Violet, passed away 22 years ago, and he now lives alone in Albany, Oregon.

WORLD & NATION

In Afghanistan, guns get the land

Arbitrary issuing, most recently by Taliban, stirs chaos

By Thomas Gibbons-Neff and Yaqoob Akbary
The New York Times

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan — For decades, roughly 1,000 families called the low-slung mud-walled neighborhood of Firqa home. Some moved in during the 1990s civil war, while others were provided housing under the previous government.

Soon after the Taliban takeover Aug. 15, the new government told them all to get out.

Ghullam Farooq, 40, sat in the darkness of his shop in Firqa last month, describing how armed Taliban fighters came at night, expelling him at gunpoint from his home in the community, a neighborhood of Kandahar city in southern Afghanistan.

“All the Taliban said was, ‘Take your stuff and go,’” he said.

Those who fled or were forcibly removed were quickly replaced with Taliban commanders and fighters.

Thousands of Afghans are facing such traumatic dislocations as the new Taliban government uses property to compensate its fighters for years of military service, amid a crumbling economy and a lack of cash.

Over decades, after every period of upheaval in Afghanistan, property becomes a crucial form of wealth for those in power to reward followers. But this arbitrary redistribution also leaves thousands displaced and fuels endless disputes in a country where the land ownership system is so informal that few hold any documentation for the ground they call their own.

As during past changes in government, distributing property to Taliban disciples in swaths of rural farmland and in desirable urban neighborhoods has turned



In a country where the land ownership system is informal, thousands face traumatic dislocations by the Taliban. JIM HUYLEBROEK/THE NEW YORK TIMES

into at least a short-term recourse to keep stability within the Taliban ranks.

“Who has the guns gets the land,” said Patricia Gossman, associate Asia director for Human Rights Watch.

In a pastoral nation split by rugged mountain ranges, dotted with deserts and little forest, land is one of the most important assets and a flashpoint, fueling blood feuds between neighbors, ethnic groups and warlords as power has changed hands. Conflicting legal systems dictating land ownership and a lack of documentation have further destabilized the property market through the generations.

Today’s land disputes in Afghanistan can be largely traced to the Soviet-backed regime that came to power in the late 1970s, which redistributed property across the country. This

quickly fueled tensions as land was confiscated and given to the poor and landless under the banner of socialism.

Land redistribution continued to play out, first during the civil war in the early 1990s and then under the rise of the Taliban. After the U.S. invasion in 2001, those same commanders who were once defeated by the Taliban went about distributing and stealing land once more, this time with the backing of the newly installed U.S.-supported government. U.S. and NATO military forces contributed to the problem by seizing property for bases and doing little to compensate landowners.

Attempts by the Western-backed government over the past two decades to formalize land ownership and property rights ulti-

mately proved futile as the incentives to take advantage of the system overwhelmed efforts to regularize it.

Now more than three months after the Taliban’s rise to power, its administrators are in a similar position, but with no official policy regarding land ownership.

“We are still analyzing and investigating how to honor land deeds and titles for people,” said Bilal Karimi, a Taliban spokesperson.

Local Taliban leaders have been seizing and re-allocating property for years in districts they captured to reward fighters and the families of their dead with land to farm or sell for profit.

In 2019, when the Taliban arrived at Mullah Abdul Salam’s modest poppy farm in Musa Qala, in Helmand province, he faced an impossible choice. Like many poor farmers in rural Afghani-

stan, he had no legal deed to prove he owned the ground he had cultivated for years.

So the Taliban gave him an ultimatum: Either pay a lump sum to keep his land or give it up.

“We came early, and we had the right to the land,” Salam recalled, standing on the edge of his poppy field in Helmand province, shovel in hand. “It had to be ours.”

For some time, the land in Musa Qala was unclaimed, undocumented and written off as unfarmable, except by a few such as Salam. Then the ground became more fertile with the widespread growth of solar power that enabled farmers to run well pumps, at far lower expense than use of conventional fuel. The Taliban tried to strike a balance by allowing the poor farmers to remain at relatively small cost, while allocating unclaimed plots

to its fighters.

But as the Taliban distribute property, parts of the population have been left confused and angered by the actions of their new government, which suspiciously resemble the behavior of its predecessors.

In Takhar province, a historically anti-Taliban stronghold in Afghanistan’s north, Taliban fighters have evicted people — including some who had lived there for over 40 years — in several districts, saying the land was unfairly distributed by previous governments, said a former Afghan lawmaker on the condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation against her family.

Takhar residents, the former lawmaker said, have started to question whether Taliban administrators can run the country any better than their predecessors.

Pacific island full of war relics, human remains

By Dera Menra Sijabat and Richard C. Paddock
The New York Times

BIAK, Indonesia — On a remote coral island in Indonesia, a history lover who keeps a collection of old bombs in his living room scours the jungle for war relics — and sometimes finds human bones, too.

“People call me Dog Tag Man,” said Alberth Wakum, who hopes one day to open a museum showcasing his discoveries. “I preserve the evidence of history and keep it from perishing.”

The island of Biak, where Wakum, 58, has spent nearly his entire life, was the scene of a fierce World War II battle as Gen. Douglas MacArthur campaigned to take back the western Pacific from Japanese forces. There were thousands of casualties on both sides.

The remains of about 150 American soldiers who died in the fighting on Biak have never been recovered. They are among about 1,900 U.S. service members believed killed in Indonesia over the course of the war and whose remains are still missing.

For decades, Wakum and other collectors have combed the battlefields of Biak and nearby islands, recovering weapons, munitions and the bones of soldiers.

Wakum, who said he has found 30 U.S. dog tags, wears some on a chain around his neck. He sold others many years ago to help pay for his brother’s education but now regrets parting with them.

Sometimes his neighbors mock him for collecting what they deem “rubbish” or complain that he is stirring up ghosts of the war dead, who follow him home from his searches.

“People say I’m doing a stupid job because I don’t make money out of this,” he said. “But for researchers, writers, collectors of art and history lovers, this has meaning.”

Last year, the United States and Indonesian



Alberth Wakum, a collector of war relics on the Indonesian island of Biak, at a site believed to have been a World War II battlefield. Collectors are still finding remnants of the Battle of Biak. ULET IFANSASTI/THE NEW YORK TIMES

governments agreed to establish a joint operation to find and repatriate the remains of U.S. soldiers lost in action across the vast archipelago. Biak, a heavily forested island about the size of Maui that lies off the northwest coast of New Guinea, will be a primary search site.

On a recent day, Wakum and a cousin, Firaun Koibur, 39, also a collector, searched a rugged area of coral outcroppings where U.S. soldiers are believed to have camped during the monthslong battle for Biak.

There, lying in plain sight, was the dog tag of an American soldier, Fred W. O’Connor of Schenectady, New York.

“Soldiers losing their dog tags is very common,” said Poul Erik Graversen, a historical archaeologist with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency and lead researcher for the recovery effort in Indonesia and Malaysia.

The O’Connor family was astounded to learn of the dog tag’s discovery more than 75 years after the war. According to family records, O’Connor served in the infantry in the Papua, New Guinea and Southern Philippines campaigns and participated in major assaults without ever being wounded. He died in California in 2004 at 83.

“My father was a man of acceptance and grace, but all the carnage affected him greatly,” said his daughter, Patricia Cherin.

Before the pandemic, many Japanese visitors and some Americans came to Biak looking for information about relatives who fought here. Divers also came to explore the sunken vessels and downed aircraft offshore.

Even before the pandemic, Biak attracted fewer than 4,000 foreign tourists a year, mostly from Japan. Many of the island’s 120,000 people get by on

farming and fishing.

The Indonesian archipelago was a Dutch colony when the Japanese invaded and occupied it in 1942. Allied forces launched their assault on Biak in May 1944. The fighting continued for three months before the Allied forces took the island, which then became an important air base for attacking Japanese strongholds.

At the request of The New York Times, Graversen reviewed photos of 125 dog tags found by Wakum and other collectors. Just one was identified as belonging to a soldier whose remains are still missing, Sgt. Louis L. Medina of New Mexico.

Assigned to the Army Air Forces, the sergeant took off on a bombing run from Biak in July 1944. His aircraft was shot down and crashed into the sea hundreds of miles away. The plane and its six crew members remain unaccounted for. It is most likely he lost his dog tag at some

point while stationed on the island.

The family of another collector, Yusuf Rumaropen, owns one of the many caves occupied by Japanese soldiers during the battle. U.S. aircraft bombed it, blowing a large hole in the roof.

Rumaropen, 59, started a museum there in 1985. His exhibits include a derelict Japanese airplane, three jeeps, machine guns, mortar shells and more than 1,000 other items.

One of his first finds was a U.S. pilot’s ring, which brought him local fame.

Learning of a plane that had crashed in a remote jungle, he found the wreck in 1980. The pilot’s skeleton was still in the cockpit, and Rumaropen removed a ring from its finger. The pilot’s name, W.E. Frankfort, was engraved inside.

The ring was too valuable to exhibit at the museum, so he displayed photos of it instead.

It took nearly a decade, but word of the ring eventually reached the Indonesian army. An officer confiscated it and turned it over to U.S. officials, who enlisted Rumaropen’s help in locating the plane and recovering the pilot’s remains in 1994.

For his effort, he received an official letter expressing the U.S. Army’s “deep and sincere appreciation.” It hangs in the museum next to photos of the ring.

He also found the bones of many soldiers. Most were identified by forensic experts as Japanese and cremated in the 1990s. About 20 were identified as American, and Rumaropen said he buried them near his museum. U.S. experts have never examined them.

The Japanese suffered far greater casualties in the Battle of Biak than the Allies. Near Biak, on the tiny island of Musaki, more than 30 skulls and a large pile of human bones believed to be the remains of Japanese soldiers are displayed in a hut.

For some on Biak and smaller islands nearby, acquiring the relics is not about history.

Samggar Usior, a fisherman on Owi Island, a 45-minute boat ride from Biak, began buying relics from scavengers as a young man. He wanted live munitions for gunpowder so he could make bottle bombs to use in reef fishing. Dropping explosives on coral reefs to kill or stun fish has been a common and destructive method of fishing in Indonesia.

Wakum said the mortar shells and hand grenades on display in his living room have been disarmed. His collection also includes various kinds of ammunition, gas masks, U.S. and Japanese helmets and hundreds of other items.

“I was born in Biak, and I want to protect these war relics from the scavengers,” he said. “If they take them all, tomorrow’s generation won’t be able to learn the history.”

BUSINESS

COURANT.COM/BUSINESS

Russian hackers haven't eased up, cyber firm says

Company that exposed SolarWinds intrusions points to ongoing theft of data

By **Eric Tucker and Frank Bajak**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The elite Russian state hackers behind last year's SolarWinds cyberespionage campaign hardly eased up this year, managing plenty of infiltrations of U.S. and allied government agencies and foreign policy think tanks with consummate craft and stealth, a leading cybersecurity firm reported Monday.

On the anniversary of the public disclosure of the SolarWinds intrusions, Mandiant said the hackers associated with Russia's SVR foreign intelligence agency continued to steal data "relevant to Russian interests" with great effect using novel, stealthy techniques that it detailed in a mostly technical report aimed at helping security professionals stay alert.

It was Mandiant, not the U.S. government, that disclosed SolarWinds.

While the number of government agencies and companies hacked by the SVR was smaller this year than last, when some 100 organizations were breached, assessing the

damage is difficult, said Charles Carmakal, Mandiant's chief technical officer. Overall, the impact is quite serious. "The companies that are getting hacked, they are also losing information."

"Not everybody is disclosing the incident(s) because they don't always have to disclose it legally," he said, complicating damage-assessment.

The Russian cyber spying unfolded, as always, mostly in the shadows as the U.S. government was consumed in 2021 by a separate, eminently "noisy" and headline-grabbing cyber threat — ransomware attacks launched not by nation-state hackers but rather criminal gangs. As it happens, those gangs are largely protected by the Kremlin.

The Mandiant findings follow an October report from Microsoft that the hackers, whose umbrella group it calls Nobelium, continue to infiltrate the government agencies, foreign policy think tanks and other organizations focused on Russian affairs through the cloud service companies and so-called managed services providers on

which they increasingly rely.

Mandiant tips its hat to Microsoft's threat researchers in the report.

Mandiant researchers said the Russian hackers "continue to innovate and identify new techniques and tradecraft" that lets them linger in victim networks, hinder detection and confuse attempts to attribute hacks to them. In short, Russia's most elite state-backed hackers are as crafty and adaptable as ever.

Mandiant said unspecified "diplomatic entities" that received malicious phishing emails were among the targets.

The SolarWinds hack exploited vulnerabilities in the software supply chain system and went undetected for most of 2020 despite compromises at a broad swath of federal agencies and dozens of companies, primarily telecommunications and information technology providers and including Mandiant and Microsoft.

The Biden administration imposed sanctions last April in response to the hack, including against six Russian companies that support the country's cyber efforts.

China tries to ease fears amid woes of developer

By **Joe McDonald**
Associated Press

BEIJING — China's central bank expanded the supply of money for lending Monday as Beijing tried to reassure its public and investors the economy can be protected if a troubled real estate developer's \$310 billion mountain of debt collapses.

Evergrande Group's struggle to turn assets into cash has prompted fear a default might chill Chinese lending markets and cause global shockwaves.

Economists say the ruling Communist Party can prevent a credit crunch, but it wants to avoid sending the wrong signal by bailing out Evergrande in the middle of a campaign to force companies to cut debt. Beijing worries is dangerously high.

The People's Bank of China said it released \$190 billion for lending by reducing the amount of money banks must hold in reserve.

Beijing was expected to show support for lending after Evergrande warned Friday night that it might run out of cash, but the central bank made no mention of the company, which it earlier accused of reckless borrowing.

Developers have been racing to pay off debt since Beijing lowered limits on their use of borrowed money last year.

Weaker real estate activity depressed economic growth to an unexpectedly low 4.9% over a year earlier in the last quarter.

The People's Bank said it wants to "support development of the real economy."

It said the reserve cut was no change in "prudent monetary policy."

If Evergrande defaults, Beijing is likely to launch a two-track strategy of pumping money into credit markets while trying to prevent home prices from crashing if developers dump apartments in a "fire sale" to raise cash, said ING economist Iris Pang.

BUSINESS BRIEFING

Toyota to build NC battery plant

RALEIGH, N.C. — Toyota is preparing to build a \$1.3 billion electric vehicle battery plant near Greensboro that will employ at least 1,750 people, government officials said Monday.

The state Economic Investment Committee voted to award at least \$79 million in incentives to the company if the project is completed.

In October, Toyota announced that it planned to build a U.S. factory to make batteries for hybrid and fully electric vehicles, with the location to be declared later in the year. The automaker said the plant would start making batteries in 2025, gradually expanding through 2031, and is part of a plan to spend \$3.4 billion in the U.S. on automotive batteries during the next decade.

Letter to Kohl's: Sell or split unit

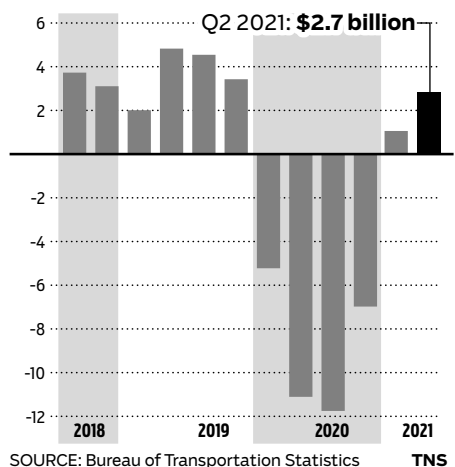
NEW YORK — An activist investor is pushing department store chain Kohl's Inc. to sell the company or spin off its e-commerce division. In a letter posted online Monday, Engine Capital LP said it wants the Wisconsin-based chain to consider these alternatives to boost the stock price.

Engine Capital said that if Kohl's chose spinning off its e-commerce division, the stand-alone business could be valued at \$12.4 billion, an amount that dwarfs the company's current market capitalization. Engine Capital also said that the board should run a market test to see how much financial sponsors would pay for the entire company.

Kohl said the board and management team "continuously examine all opportunities for maximizing shareholder value."

U.S. airline income/loss

Quarterly income/loss, U.S. scheduled passenger airlines, scale in billions



Gift cards are displayed last month at a retail store in Dallas. Shoppers may turn to more gift cards this year, experts say. **LM OTERO/AP**

Out of stock? Out of luck too

Pandemic supply chain snarls make it even harder for many shoppers to find popular gifts

By **Anne D'Innocenzio**
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Like many shoppers, Kathleen Webber understands the struggles of getting the right gifts for her three children this holiday shopping season amid widespread shortages.

She promised to buy her 23-year-old son the Sony Corp. PlayStation 5, but they haven't been able to get their hands on the popular game console. Webber says she may have to get him the next best thing — a used smartphone.

"I just don't know where to get one," the Yardley, Pennsylvania, resident said of the PS5. "It's like the Tickle Me Elmos" from 1996.

The holidays have always been defined by disappointing out-of-stock messages on the most popular items. But the pandemic-induced supply chain snarls have created unprecedented shortages across all types of products, from the chips that go into gaming consoles to more mundane items like ties and pajamas.

That has many customers buying early as shortfalls are only expected to worsen as the holiday season moves into the final stretch.

Some shoppers like Danny Groner aren't being choosy. When Groner realized he needed a new tie for a wedding in December, he found the perfect answer on Amazon: a \$7.99 skinny black-and-white tie.

But four days later, he received an email message informing him the tie was out of stock and it wouldn't arrive until January. That sent the New York publicist into a fit of desperation and forced him to go back on the site for any tie that would meet the approaching deadline.

"It didn't matter to me whether it was ugly — it got here," says Groner, who settled on a yellow-and-blue checkered tie.

On Cyber Monday — the biggest online shopping day of the year — the prevalence of out-of-stock messages rose 8% compared to a week earlier, according to Adobe Digital Economy Index. From Nov. 1 through Nov. 29, the number of out-of-stock messages soared close to twofold compared with pre-pandemic levels in January 2020 and up 258% from November 2019, Adobe said.

In response, stores like Kohl's have added new online tools to help push shoppers to substitutes if their top choice is gone. Shipt,

a grocery delivery service owned by Target, now offers customers substitute suggestions based, in part, on their prior shopping behavior. And technology company Obsess, which creates virtual shopping experiences for such brands as American Girl and Ralph Lauren, added tools that recommend next best items if the shopper clicks on something that's out of stock; it also offers quizzes to help figure out what they would like.

But there are plenty of shoppers who won't be happy with alternatives, particularly when it comes to must-have toys like Spinmaster's Gabby's Dollhouse Purrrfect Playset and Moose Toys' Magic Mixies Magical Misting Cauldron. Some are resorting to eBay where they're paying three times more than the suggested retail price. Experts also believe they will turn more to gift cards if they don't like what they see.

A lot is at stake for retailers.

If shoppers can't get what they want at one store, they could go to another competitor or just not buy an alternative. That could dampen holiday sales, which are expected to be up 8.5% to 10.5% for the November-December period, compared with the year-ago period, according to the National Retail Federation, the nation's largest retail trade group.

Trump social media venture under scrutiny

By **Matthew Goldstein and David Enrich**

The New York Times

Securities regulators have opened investigations into the planned merger of a nascent social media company backed by former President Donald Trump with a so-called blank-check company that raised nearly \$300 million in an initial public offering in September.

The investigations by the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority were disclosed Monday in a regulatory filing by Digital World Acquisition Corp., the special purpose acquisition company that intends to merge with Trump Media Technology

Group.

Both regulators are looking for information regarding the trading in shares of Digital World. The SEC is also looking into "documents and communications" between Digital World and Trump Media.

Digital World said it was cooperating with the requests for information.

The investigation, which Digital World said began in early November, comes after The New York Times reported that the CEO of Digital World, Patrick Orlando, had talks with representatives of Trump Media as far back as March about doing a deal.

Digital World was established as a special purpose acquisition company — an entity that raises money through an IPO and then seeks a company to acquire. When SPACs

go public, they are not supposed to have engaged in merger talks without disclosing that to investors.

Digital World disclosed the regulatory investigations in a filing announcing that institutional investors had committed to providing an additional \$1 billion to finance the merger in exchange for deeply discounted shares.

The filing said FINRA asked Digital World to provide information about trading activity before the Oct. 21 announcement of the planned merger with Trump Media. The SEC, according to the company, has asked for documents including those relating to meetings of Digital World's board and "certain documents and communications between DWAC and TMTG."

BUSINESS



San Cheng, a Taiwanese American game designer, was arrested in Beijing for buying toy guns on Alibaba's Taobao shopping site. MARK MAKELA/THE NEW YORK TIMES

China's strict but messy gun laws now ensnare toy buyers

By Chris Buckley and Raymond Zhong
The New York Times

When the police swarmed into San Cheng's apartment in Beijing late at night and accused him of illegally buying guns, he was sure it was a mix-up.

True, he had bought dozens of toy guns on Taobao, the Alibaba shopping site, as props for his business designing shoot-em-up games for smartphones. But the seemingly harmless replicas were so cheap and easily purchased, Cheng said, that he thought owning them could not be a crime.

He was wrong. Cheng, 47, a Taiwanese American game designer, ended up spending three years in detention and prison. In detention, he said, he met 20 or so other men who had also been arrested in a police sweep against buying replica guns online.

China has some of the world's toughest weapons laws, including broad definitions of what counts as an illegal gun. But Cheng's experience shows how wildly expansive the rules

can be, potentially punishing people for buying toy or replica guns that are widely available online.

"They're China's biggest digital retailing platform," Cheng said, referring to Taobao, in an interview from New Jersey, where he has been recovering after his release from a Chinese prison last year. "People just don't understand that they're illegal, because if you go on to Taobao and search for toy guns, you'll get so many recommendations."

Chinese authorities have mostly prosecuted the buyers of such items and, to a lesser extent, the sellers, according to a search of an online nationwide database of court judgments. But the online shopping platforms where these sales take place have rarely been targeted, and it is unclear how much legal responsibility companies like Alibaba have in such situations.

In Taobao's terms of service, Alibaba warns shoppers that they are buying from third-party merchants, which means the company cannot possibly guarantee that each

and every product is safe, high-quality and legal. Alibaba declined to comment.

Cheng and other campaigners have urged authorities to turn up the pressure on China's online shopping sites rather than jail ill-informed buyers.

China's strong gun controls mean that fatal shootings are rare, and many citizens support the laws to keep it that way. But there has been a growing debate over the legal definition of a firearm. Experts say China's regulations — which ban buying, selling or owning weapons above a very low threshold of force — are vague and hard for laypeople, even judges, to understand. The result, critics say, is that unsuspecting buyers of compressed-air and spring-powered toys are turned into criminals.

China's gun control law of 1996 states that to be legally classified as a gun, a weapon has to be capable of killing someone or knocking them unconscious. But in 2010, the Chinese Ministry of Public Security imposed far stricter rules that in effect defined many toys as illegal guns.

Christmas tree buyers face reduced supplies, high prices

By Terence Chea
Associated Press

ALAMEDA, Calif. — Even Christmas trees aren't immune to the pandemic-induced shortages and inflation plaguing the economy.

Extreme weather and supply chain disruptions have reduced supplies of both real and artificial trees this season. American shoppers should expect to have fewer choices and pay up to 30% more for both types this Christmas, industry officials said.

"It's a double whammy — weather and supply chain problems are really hampering the industry," said Jami Warner, executive director of the American Christmas Tree Association, an industry trade group. "Growers have been hard hit by floods, fires, smoke, drought, extreme weather conditions."

Record-breaking heat and wildfires in late June took a heavy toll on Christmas tree farms in Oregon and Washington, two of the nation's largest growers.

Warner could not provide an estimate of how many fewer trees there will be this year but because it takes up to 10 years to grow, the crop loss will be felt for many seasons to come.

The shortage of truck drivers is making it harder and more expensive to transport live trees from farms to stores and tree lots.

Warner's advice: "Shop early. If you see something you like, buy it."

At Crystal River Christmas Trees, owner Dale Pine and his nephew Stacy Valenzuela struggled to get enough trees to sell at their tree lot in Alameda. Many of its suppliers in Oregon lost trees in the triple-digit heat wave.

"It was looking pretty grim for a while," Valenzuela said. "Every single day you're on the phone check-



Dale Pine, owner of Crystal River Christmas Trees, prepares a tree for sale Nov. 24 at his lot in Alameda, California. Both real and artificial trees are in short supply. TERRY CHEA/AP

ing, 'Hey, you got anything? If you do, send it my way.' So a lot of work to get these trees on the ground this year."

Crystal River had to raise prices this year because the costs of trees, labor and truck delivery have all gone up, Valenzuela said.

Alameda resident Ian Stepkowski came to Crystal River lot to buy a Silvertip tree with his wife and two young kids the day after Thanksgiving.

"We're having shortages of everything and of course it had to take Christmas trees," Stepkowski said. "Definitely noticing everything's a bit more expensive this year already."

Teri Schaffert heard about the shortage of real trees this year, so she decided to buy an artificial tree for the first time. Almost a week before Thanksgiving, she went to shop at the Burlington showroom of Balsam Hill, which primarily sells its artificial trees online.

"I came in early because I heard in the news that there's not going to be enough fresh Christmas

trees," said Schaffert, who lives in nearby San Mateo. Her husband isn't happy about the change. "What else can we do? I have to get ready for the future because I love Christmas. I love to decorate."

But the artificial tree industry is struggling with its own supply troubles as clogged ports and the lack of truckers delay shipments and raise costs, said Caroline Tuan, Balsam Hill's chief operating officer. The company's trees are about 20% more expensive this year and there is less variety.

"We have to bring our products over from our factories (in China), and that has been very challenging," Tuan said. "All of that has impacted us, which means that we have fewer trees to sell as an industry."

Worries about drought and drought led David Cruise and his wife to the Balsam Hill showroom to buy their first artificial tree this year.

"In the grand scheme of climate change here in California, this is really the way to go," said Cruise, who lives in Brentwood.

MARKET RUNDOWN

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

▲ DOW 35,227.03 +646.95

▲ 10-YR T-BOND 1.43% +.10

▼ GOLD \$1,777.50 -4.50

35,960

34,980

34,000

37,000

Close: 35,227.03

Change: 646.95 (1.9%)

10 DAYS

37,000

36,000

35,000

34,000

33,000

J J A S O N

Domestic Indexes

	CLOSE	CHG.	YTD
DOW Indus.	35,227.03	+646.95	+15.10%
DOW Trans.	16,327.63	+360.39	+30.55%
DOW Util.	927.09	+13.06	+7.22%
NYSE Comp.	16,591.97	+244.09	+14.23%
Nasdaq Comp.	15,225.15	+139.68	+18.13%
S&P 500	4,591.67	+53.24	+22.25%
S&P 400	2,755.90	+53.76	+19.48%
Wilshire 5000	46,912.93	+551.98	+18.90%
Russell 2000	2,203.48	+44.17	+11.58%

Commodities

	CLOSE	PREV.	YTD
FUELS			
Crude Oil (bbl)	69.49	66.26	+43.22%
Natural Gas (mm btu)	3.66	4.13	+44.03%
Unleaded Gas (gal)	2.04	1.95	+43.51%
METALS			
Gold (oz)	1,777.50	1,782.00	-6.11%
Silver (oz)	22.23	22.45	-15.59%

Foreign Exchange

	ForEx in U.S. \$	U.S. \$ in ForEx
Britain	1.3257	.7543
Canada	.7830	1.2771
China	.1568	6.3763
Euro	1.1278	.8867
Japan	.008811	113.49
Mexico	.047112	21.2260

Money Rates

	CLOSE	PREV.	WK.
Prime rate	3.25	3.25	
3-mo. T-Bill	0.06	0.06	
6-mo. T-Bill	0.13	0.10	
5-yr T-Note	1.21	1.18	
10-yr T-Note	1.43	1.52	
30-yr T-Bond	1.75	1.88	

Global Markets

	CLOSE	CHG.	%CHG.	%YTD
Frankfurt	15,380.79	+210.81	+1.39%	+12.11%
London	7,232.28	+109.96	+1.54%	+11.95%
Hong Kong	23,349.38	-417.31	-1.76%	-14.25%
Nikkei	27,927.37	-102.20	-.36%	+1.76%

Stocks of Local Interest				
STOCK (TICKER)	CLOSE	CHG.	YTD	%CHG
AMC Entertainment A (AMC)	28.79	-.22	+1258.0	
AT&T Inc (T)	23.28	-.18	-19.1	
Adv Micro Dev (AMD)	139.06	-4.95	+51.6	
American Airlines Gp (AAL)	17.93	+1.31	+13.7	
Amphenol Corp (APH)	82.75	+1.08	...	
Apple Inc (AAPL)	165.32	+3.48	+24.6	
Ardelyx Inc (ARDX)	1.38	-.14	-78.7	
Avangrid Inc (AGR)	50.69	+3.0	+11.5	
Bank of America (BAC)	44.15	+.28	+45.7	
Barnes Group (B)	46.74	+.93	-7.8	
Booking Holdings (BKNG)	2227.28	+112.84	...	
Brist Myr Sqb (BMY)	56.83	+.51	-8.4	
CVS Health Corp (CVS)	92.65	+1.78	+35.7	
Carnival Corp (CCL)	18.59	+1.39	-14.2	
Carrier Global Corp (CARR)	55.85	-.27	+48.1	
Charter Communio (CHTR)	672.95	-6.35	+1.7	
Cigna Corp (CI)	206.59	+7.73	-.8	
Cisco Syst (CSCO)	56.96	+.73	+27.3	
Citigroup (C)	62.52	-.24	+1.4	
CocaCola Co (KO)	54.91	+1.37	+.1	
Comcast Corp A (CMCSA)	52.35	+.57	-.1	
ContextLogic Inc (WISH)	3.61	+.33	-80.2	
Cumberland Pharm (CPIX)	6.94	+2.35	+135.3	
Delta Air Lines (DAL)	38.14	+2.16	-5.1	
DiDi Global Inc (DIDI)	6.67	+.60	-52.8	
Disney (DIS)	150.37	+4.15	-17.0	
DraftKings Inc (DKNG)	30.68	+2.31	-34.1	
EMCOR Group Inc (EME)	125.18	+1.36	+36.9	
Energy Transfer L.P. (ET)	8.18	-.05	+32.4	
Ethan Allen (ETD)	24.28	+.79	+20.1	
Eversource Energy (ES)	86.14	+.84	-.4	
Ford Motor (F)	19.22	+.08	+118.7	
FuelCell Energy (FCEL)	7.20	-.10	-35.6	
Gen Dynamics (GD)	199.57	+1.94	+34.1	
Gen Electric (GE)	96.01	+3.24	+11.4	
Grab Holdings Ltd A (GRAB)	9.00	+.01	+2.9	
Hartford Fn Sv (HIG)	67.67	+1.03	+38.2	
Honeywell Intl (HON)	206.25	+2.75	-3.0	
Horizon Tech Fin (HRZN)	16.49	+.21	+24.5	
Infosys Ltd (INFY)	22.25	-.63	+31.3	
InsigniaSy (ISIG)	15.05	+10.11	+156.0	
Intel Corp (INTC)	50.99	+1.74	+2.3	
Kaman (KAMN)	41.95	+1.75	-26.6	
Keycorp (KEY)	23.06	+.65	+40.5	
Lincoln Natl Corp (LNC)	66.35	+.80	+31.9	

STOCK (TICKER)	CLOSE	CHG.	YTD	%CHG
Lucid Group Inc (LCID)	44.86	-2.41	+67.2	
MGM Resorts Intl (MGM)	42.21	+2.04	+34.0	
Magellan Health Inc (MGLN)	94.51	+.07	+14.1	
Meten Holding Group (METX)	.28	+.02	-85.8	
MetLife Inc (MET)	59.67	+.25	+27.1	
Microsoft Corp (MSFT)	326.19	+3.18	+46.7	
Norwegian Cruise Ln (NCLH)	20.03	+1.74	-21.2	
Novartis AG (NVS)	80.53	+.53	-14.7	
Nvidia Corporation (NVDA)	300.37	-6.56	+130.1	
Otis Worldwide Corp (OTIS)	84.01	+1.21	+24.4	
PG&E Corp (PCG)	12.54	+.73	+.6	
Palantir Technol (PLTR)	18.80	-.18	-20.2	
Peoples Utd Fncl (PBCT)	17.50	+.50	+35.3	
Pfizer Inc (PFE)	51.48	-2.79	+39.9	
Pitney Bowes (PBI)	6.74	+.12	+.9	
Progenity Inc (PROG)	2.82	+.46	-46.9	
Prudential Fncl (PRU)	104.20	+1.47	+33.5	
Pub Svc Ent Gp (PEG)	63.71	+.26	+.9	
Raytheon Technolog (RTX)	83.76	+2.65	+17.1	
Rogers Corp (ROG)	272.00	-.56	+75.2	
SS&C Technologies (SSNC)	76.51	+1.48	+.5	
SoFi Technologies (SOFI)	15.72	+.53	-30.6	
Sthwstn Energy (SWN)	4.91	+.34	+64.8	
Stanley Black & Deck (SWK)	184.36	+2.30	+3.2	
Starwood Prop Trust (STWD)	25.44	+.35	+31.8	
Sundial Growers Inc (SNDL)	.57	+.01	+21.1	
Terex Corp (TEX)	44.02	+1.09	+26.2	
Tesla Inc (TSLA)	1009.01	-5.96	+43.0	
Travelers Cos (TRV)	151.82	+2.66	+8.2	
Twitter Inc (TWTR)	44.47	+2.40	-17.9	
Uber Technologies (UBER)	38.49	+2.64	-24.5	
United Airlines Hldg (UAL)	43.99	+3.38	+1.7	
United Rentals (URI)	344.89	+12.06	+48.7	
UnitedHealth Group (UNH)	460.11	+10.79	+31.2	
Virtus Invest (VRTS)	293.30	+1.57	+35.2	
Voya Financial (VOYA)	63.06	+.76	+.7	
Webster Financial (WBS)	55.04	+1.79	+30.6	
Wells Fargo & Co (WFC)	48.81	+1.06	+61.7	
White Mtns Insur (WTM)	1007.63	+20.73	+.7	
World Wrestling Ent (WWE)	49.34	-.08	+2.7	
XPO Logistics Inc (XPO)	75.48	+1.88	+8.8	
Xerox Holdings Corp (XRX)	20.47	+.47	-11.7	

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OPINION

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OP-ED

For US flights, on-site tests may be best option

By Sheldon H. Jacobson

President Joe Biden’s administration has introduced new COVID-19 vaccination requirements for travelers into the United States. Mandated vaccination with an approved set of vaccines remains the easiest pathway into the country, with those who are vaccine-exempt subject to more severe testing requirements.

With the omicron variant an emerging threat, point of departure testing on international flights becomes even more critical.

This begs the question, should there also be a vaccination requirement for domestic flights, given the emergence of omicron and that we are now in the heavy holiday travel season?

Public sentiment supports such a mandate, which has elicited pressure from lawmakers. In spite of such calls, the answer is no.

The COVID-19 vaccines have proved to be remarkably effective. Vaccinated individuals reap tremendous personal benefits. They are kept out of hospitals and are less like to die, with reduced risk of infection an added benefit. The population benefits significantly from fewer people requiring medical care and less virus circulation.

Breakthrough infections continue to occur, which means that just because a person is vaccinated, it does not mean that they cannot be infected. Nor are they immune from spreading the virus. Vaccination reduces the risk of infection and spreading the virus, but it does not eliminate such risks. This means that the greatest risks on an airplane are to those who are unvaccinated, a choice they likely made for themselves, given the widespread availability of the vaccines at no cost.

The waning protection offered by the vaccines over time further complicates any vaccination mandate. As such, a person fully vaccinated two months ago is better protected than a person vaccinated eight months ago, everything else being equal. This is also the case for natural immunity, with protection waning over time. Therefore, checking each passenger’s vaccination status must also include when their last dose was administered. Without such information, each person’s vaccination status offers different levels of protection, which would be a challenge to capture with a vaccination mandate. Overall, a vaccination mandate would provide a false sense of health security on airplanes and in airports.

On a practical level, verifying every traveler’s vaccination status can be complicated. The majority of people have a



A COVID-19 test center operates inside the Tom Bradley International Terminal at Los Angeles International Airport on Wednesday in Los Angeles. **MARIO TAMA/GETTY**

vaccination verification card. What if a person claims to be vaccinated, but cannot produce their verification card, complete with which vaccine they received and the dates of vaccination? Would they be denied boarding? What about forged or tampered cards? Are airport personnel equipped to deal with such issues? Vaccination exemptions would further complicate any vaccination mandate. How would they be managed?

What further exacerbates all these checks and verifications is that they add an additional layer of tasks that airline or airport personnel would be required to undertake as they serve the massive number of domestic flyers. The most likely scenario is that they would create intolerable flight delays and conflicts between passengers and airline personnel, particularly if a person cannot provide the necessary vaccination or exemption verification information. All these issues make enforcing

any vaccination mandate untenable, effectively creating more chaos than calm.

So what can be done to help make flights more health secure from COVID-19?

Airplanes are equipped to circulate air through high efficiency particulate air filters that exchange cabin air every few minutes. This provides healthy air ventilation during flights. The federal mask mandate adds yet another layer of risk reduction for virus transmission.

When on a commercial flight, the most important health risk factor is not whether people are vaccinated, but whether they are infected. However, asking people for proof of a negative COVID-19 test makes no sense, since the value of such tests ages quickly. Moreover, the variety of tests available may translate into different levels of sensitivity and specificity, creating a veil of uncertainty around each test’s interpretation.

It would be better to add on-site test-

ing at the airport. Just as passengers pass through TSA airport security checkpoints, similar health security checkpoints outside of the security checkpoint area can be set up at airports that provide an at-home test for each traveler. Deploying such mobile sites at airports in areas with high transmission risk would likely be sufficient. However, each airport authority and their airlines should have the option to institute it, rather than requiring it across the entire air system. COVID-19 vaccines provide remarkable risk reduction benefits.

If a person is wise, vaccination offers them significant protection when traveling. But asking all air travelers to provide proof of vaccination is misguided and would create enforcement and verification problems with limited practical benefit.

Sheldon H. Jacobson is professor of computer science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

OP-ED

Work on Sebold film helped clear rape conviction

By Timothy Mucciante

In November, the 1982 rape conviction of Anthony J. Broadwater was overturned. Broadwater spent more than 16 years in a New York state prison after being convicted of raping Alice Sebold, the best-selling author of “The Lovely Bones” and “Lucky,” a memoir that chronicles the rape and its aftermath. He has been on the sex offender registry ever since. He has always proclaimed his innocence.

When I originally signed on as an executive producer of the film adaptation of “Lucky,” I could not have imagined that I would end up friends with Broadwater, let alone help to get his record cleared. At the time I didn’t know his name; I was told Sebold’s assailant was Gregory Madison, though that name was actually the pseudonym used for Broadwater in her book.

When I first read “Lucky,” I was deeply distressed by the horrific attack Sebold endured as a freshman in college. She deserves all of our empathy and sympathy.

But after I became involved in the production of the film based on “Lucky,” I reread the book with a more critical eye. I began to sense that the portions of the book that dealt with the arrest and subsequent trial of her attacker were not credible. For example, in the book when Sebold identifies the wrong man in the police lineup, she wrote that an assistant district attorney tells her that the men in the lineup “really worked a number on you.” That remark didn’t ring true to me. I discussed my concerns with some of the production team and was assured that Scribner, the publisher of the book, had thoroughly vetted and fact-checked it before its publication.

After I first received a copy of the film’s shooting script in March, it was suggested that the race of the assailant be changed from a Black man to a white one. I was told that a Black actor consulted on the role said that he was afraid having a Black man as the rapist of a white woman in the film could contribute to the actual violence of white people against Black men in our country, perhaps even leading to a Black man being killed. Though making significant changes between source material and a script is common practice in film adaptations, even those based on true stories, this change and others kept my unease with aspects of the book fresh in mind.

I continued to bring up inconsistencies from the source material to the production team, even suggesting we bring in another director. But I was told that based on



Anthony Broadwater, center, 61, appears Nov. 22 in Syracuse, N.Y., after a judge overturned his conviction that wrongfully put him in state prison for the rape of author Alice Sebold. Sebold apologized to Broadwater on Tuesday and said she was struggling with the role she unwittingly played “within a system that sent an innocent man to jail.” Her 1981 rape was the basis for her memoir “Lucky.” **KATRINA TULLOCH/AP**



Author Alice Sebold. **TINA FINEBERG/AP**

another producer’s years of dealing with Sebold, he felt she would agree with their assessment of the changes in the script and would want to keep the director on.

This was the beginning of the end of my association with the production. On June 7 I received a notice of termination

from producer James Brown, primarily for not providing the film with funding I initially had agreed to. I had hesitated to pay, despite my contract, after my doubts began.

Initially, my break with production felt like a relief. But the whole experience continued to bother me and I began to seek answers. While I’m not 100% certain why I felt I had to dig, I’m sure it was a combination of the questions that remained and the frustration with how my role on the film had ended.

In early July I hired Dan Myers, a private investigator in Syracuse, to look into the case, beginning with identifying the real name of the man convicted of raping Sebold. Myers uncovered the name Anthony Broadwater, and his investigation, as well as the work of the attorneys he is associated with, ultimately resulted in the

overturning of Broadwater’s conviction.

Broadwater’s unfair conviction is yet another example of the racism our justice system perpetuates on people of color, especially Black people. The “Lucky” production, now canceled, was another way this kind of racism is monetized.

Broadwater is a man who served his country as a Marine, a man who was forced to support himself and his family by doing odd jobs after his release from prison. But despite everything he has endured, he is a man who has accepted Sebold’s apology, and one who refused to give up hope on his decadeslong fight to prove his innocence. I am humbled to now call him my friend.

Timothy Mucciante is president of Medici Media and Red Badge Films, which is now producing a documentary about the Anthony Broadwater case called “Unlucky.”

OBITUARIES BY TOWN

BERLIN David Albert	Other Town in CT Grayce A. Brooks William F. Mozzer
BLOOMFIELD Denise D. Shephard Errol R. Williams	PLAINVILLE Robert Kane
COLCHESTER Doris M. Green	PORTLAND Catherine Pegorer
EAST HARTFORD Robert J. Damaschi, Sr. Ilyana Schand	ROCKY HILL Annemarie Garrahy
FARMINGTON Anna R. Moriarty	SOUTH WINDSOR William L. Williams, Jr.
GLASTONBURY Dr. Eric M. Damato	SOUTHINGTON Robert Kane
HARTFORD Corinne P. Brysh Ilyana Schand Denise D. Shephard William L. Williams, Jr.	TOLLAND Ruth-Ellen Macdonald
MANCHESTER Stephen M. Barrera Anna R. Moriarty Robert Sheftel	WATERBURY Francisca Pinto
MERIDEN Corinne P. Brysh David A. Nemeth	WEST HARTFORD Sister Lilyan M. Fraher, Rsm Edward H. Friedman Mark N. Levine Edward Quinlan Patricia M. Williams
OLD SAYBROOK Gloria A. Egelhofer	WINDSOR LOCKS Robert J. Miselis

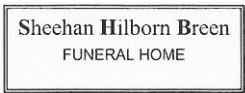
* Denotes name listing only.
Please note: not all death notices are in alphabetical order.

OBITUARIES

Fraher, RSM, Sister Lilyan Mary



Sister Lilyan Mary Fraher, RSM, (formerly Sister Mary de Montfort), died peacefully on December 5, 2021 in the Baggot Street Community, Saint Mary Home, West Hartford, CT. Born in Bridgeport, CT on August 13, 1937 to the late Thomas and Mildred (Cooper) Fraher, she entered the Sisters of Mercy in September 1955, following her graduation from the Academy of Our Lady of Mercy (Lauralton Hall), Milford, CT. While a student at Lauralton Hall, she was profoundly influenced by the life and spirituality of the principal, Sister Mary Hines, RSM, which contributed to Sister Lilyan's decision to enter the Sisters of Mercy community. She found the commitment of the sisters to service to the poor, sick and uneducated consistent with her life plan. Throughout the next 60 years following her profession of final vows in 1961, she found joy, hope and happiness in a variety of ministries. After earning a BA in Education in 1959 from the Diocesan Sisters' College, Madison, Sister Lilyan pursued graduate studies in theology and scripture at the Catholic University of America and Boston College, receiving an MA in Religious Studies from the University of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, (1973). As a teacher and administrator, Sister Lilyan was recognized for her ability to tap into the potential of students and colleagues, blending her enthusiasm, quiet peacefulness, and warm smile as together they created a vision for the future. This vision led Sister Lilyan to expand her influences into formal religious education programs, retreats and spiritual direction. Accepting leadership positions for the Sisters of Mercy, she guided the spiritual development of countless individuals. In 1996, Sister Lilyan Fraher received the Lauralton Hall Mother Mary Augustine Claven Award in recognition of her life in Mercy. Predeceased by her parents, Sister Lilyan is survived by her brother Thomas and his wife, Carol Fraher; her nephews and their wives, Patrick and Mary, Thomas and Valerie; her grandnephews and nieces, Lucy, Peter, Stephen, Zoe, her cousin Cathy Menge and her children Caitlin, Crista, and Ryan, her cousin Brian Iwanski, his wife Teresa and his children Amanda and Alyssa and their spouses; many additional loving cousins; her countless counselees, and the Sisters of Mercy, especially her close friends, Mary Frances McMahon, RSM and Mary O'Neill, RSM. The Sisters of Mercy are grateful to the Saint Mary Home staff for the compassionate care provided to Sister Lilyan during her extended illness. Sister Lilyan's Funeral Mass and Wake will be held on Friday, (December 10), at Saint Mark the Evangelist Church, 467 South Quaker Lane, West Hartford. You are asked to wear masks at the services. The wake will be at 11:00 a.m. with a wake service at about 11:15 a.m., the Mass of Christian Burial will follow at 12 noon and after Mass will be the burial in Saint Mary Cemetery, 2021 Albany Ave, West Hartford. You are asked to consider donations in her memory to the Sisters of Mercy, 25 Prescott Street, 1st floor, West Hartford, CT 06110. Online condolences may be made at www.SheehanHilbornBreen.com



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Damaschi, Sr., Robert J.



Robert J. Damaschi Sr., 93, widower of Mary (Cassello) Damaschi, of East Hartford, peacefully entered into eternal life on Saturday, December 4, 2021 at his home, surrounded by family. Born in Hartford on February 13, 1928, son to the late Giancesco and Mary (Gentile) Damaschi, he had been a resident of East Hartford for over 68 years. Robert was actively involved in the town of East Hartford, he was on the Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Education, Planning and Zoning Commission and the Town Council. Robert was also appointed to the EMS Commission to bring EMS to East Hartford. He had worked for Moriarty Brothers, Purdy Corporation and Alloy Specialties. Robert is survived and will be missed by his children; Carol Damaschi-Bolduc of East Hartford, Robert J. Damaschi Jr. and his wife Victoria of Manchester, Lynne Damaschi-Gelineau and her husband Brett of East Hartford, David P. Damaschi, Sr. and his wife Eva-Jane of Ashford and Mark J. Damaschi, Sr. and his wife Maureen of East Hartford, his sweet grandchildren; Craig Damaschi and his wife Rande of Wethersfield, David P. Damaschi, Jr. and his wife Morgan of Manchester, Anthony Damaschi of Ashford, Nicole Damaschi, Brett Gelineau and his wife Audrey, Jacqueline Damaschi and Mark J. Damaschi Jr., all of East Hartford, his precious great grandchildren; Hayden and Sienna Damaschi, Jayla Colon and Greyson Damaschi, as well as many nieces, nephews and dear friends. He was predeceased by his brothers, George and Leonard and a sister, Anita. The family will receive relatives and friends on Thursday, December 9, from 9-11 a.m. followed by a Prayer Service at 11 a.m. at the D'Esopo-East Hartford Memorial Chapel, 30 Carter St., East Hartford. Burial will follow in St. Mary's Cemetery, East Hartford. To share a memory of Robert with his family, please visit www.desopoech.com



D'Esopo
Funeral Chapel

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OBITUARIES

Friedman, Edward H.



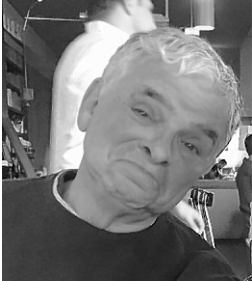
We began to believe he was indeed immortal. But, sadly, Edward H. Friedman once widely known as the Carpet King, succumbed to old age on December 4, 2021 at the age of 98. Ed was from West Hartford. Eddy owned the Friedman Rug Company and later Friedman's Floor Covering Center, which he ran with his wife and son, selling carpeting to everyone in Connecticut proving, as Woody Allen once quipped, that "There are three things Jewish people worship: God, Chinese food and wall-to-wall carpeting." Ed believed in two out of the three. Ed, the son of Sam and May Friedman (Lappen), was born in Hartford on September 30, 1923, and lived his entire life in the Hartford area. He grew up on Seym's Street, graduated from Hartford High, and then served in the 101st Airborne division of the Army in World War II. As a paratrooper, he was one of the brave soldiers who landed in Normandy and then served in the Battle of the Bulge -- among his proudest moments. Ed wore his Screaming Eagle hat till the day he died. Ed married his sweetheart and best friend forever Frances Swaller Friedman (aka Boobala, Franny, Fagie) after the war and the two of them moved to West Hartford and shared a life of travel, humor and non-stop fun for 74 years, never once leaving each other's sides (The Hartford Courant commemorated their relationship in "Love Story: Love at First Kiss Put this Couple on a Long Ride Together" <https://www.courant.com/love-story/hc-love-story-fran-eddy-friedman-1025-story.html> Eddy may have been a businessman for a living, but he was an artist at heart: He sculpted like Giacometti (and his family called him Giacom-EDDY), loved to build and tinker and renovate rooms in the house. He enjoyed music of all types, conducting Mozart from his armchair and marching around the living room to the Marines' and Army's military bands. Until his late 80s, he regularly drove Fagie and a carful of friends to New York to see the ballet, go to theatre and visit museums -- until he no longer was able to drive long-distances. Even in his early 90s, Ed and Fran went out to lunch every day to split a sandwich (always her choice) and even trudged to the movie theatre to watch the Metropolitan opera live. And he kept his humor and sly wit -- and abundant sweetness and love -- till his final days. Eddy leaves many survivors including his beloved and loving wife Frannie (his "Bashert"), his three adoring children Mitchell (Ann), Bruce (Arline) and Karen (Harry), his nieces Donna and Leslie, and nephew Kenny (Patty and Anna, Ami and Mia), a bevy of loved cousins and many fabulous friends who were a lifeline, particularly in his final years. He is pre-deceased by his brothers Harold and Stanley and his nephew Larry. He was also blessed to have four wonderful, loving long-time caretakers Sophia, Marion, Vanessa and Dorothy -- who helped him through his final years. We also want to thank those who helped him at the end: Gail and Marzena at the VA Home-based program, Emily and Rosemarie at Beacon Hospice, and Sharmilla. There will be a graveside service with full military honors on Wednesday December 8, 2021 at 11:30 a.m. at the Hartford Mutual Society Cemetery on 74 Wolcott Rd, East Granby (adjacent to the Simsbury airport). During the week (shiva) the family is observing a private period of mourning. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, at 345 Whitney Avenue New Haven, CT 06511 <https://bit.ly/3xYx8xV>; or to Hartford Hospital at <https://giving.hartfordhospital.org/donate>; or the Home Based Primary Care at the Veterans Administration (VA) at 950 Campbell Avenue, West Haven CT 06516 -- or please donate to a charity of your choice. Eddy will be loved forever and will always live in our hearts. Funeral arrangements were conducted by the Hebrew Funeral Association, West Hartford, CT. Please sign guestbook at courant.com/obituaries

Brysh, Corinne P.



Corinne Purcell Brysh, 88, of Meriden, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, November 24, 2021. Born on May 10, 1933 in White Plains, New York, she was the daughter of the late Thomas J. Purcell and Germaine (Raby) Purcell. She was predeceased by her husband, Robert B. Brysh. Corinne was a graduate of Mount Saint Joseph Academy in West Hartford, class of 1951. She attended The College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale, New York and graduated in 1955 from the Teacher's College of Connecticut in New Britain. Corinne was an active parishioner of St. Rose Church, Meriden where she was a member of the parish council and assisted with many social events including the annual St. Patrick's Day dance. She later became a member of Mary Our Queen Church in Southington and most recently at Our Lady Queen of Angels in Meriden. She was employed by the Meriden School System as a teacher at Israel Putnam School. She later worked at both The American Heart Association and The American Diabetes Association until retirement. Corinne was a former member of the American Association of University Women and the Connecticut Education Association. She was honored to have served on the Distribution Committee for the Cuno Foundation which distributes grants to non-profit organizations as well as scholarships for local high school students attending college. Corinne's main delight in life was her family who gave her such pleasure and pride and her friends with whom she shared so many wonderful times. Known among her family and friends as "Keenie," her favorite memories included spending time at Knollwood Beach in Old Saybrook, the YMCA Outdoor Center and the Mountain Grove Swim Club. She was an avid reader and book club member as well as a crossword puzzle enthusiast. Corinne was a devoted Notre Dame fan and enjoyed following the UCONN Women's basketball team. She is survived by her daughter, Kathleen B. Davenport and her husband, Morris, of Avon; her son, Theodore R. Brysh and his wife, Marcia, of Guilford; her five grand-children who called her "Mim," Caroline, Meredith, Andrew, Blake, and Grayson; a brother, Thomas J. Purcell and his wife, Ann, of Meriden; as well as several nieces and nephews. Family and friends are invited to attend a Memorial Mass to be held on Saturday, December 11, 2021 at 11:00 am at Our Lady Queen of Angels Parish, St. Joseph Campus, 109 Goodwill Avenue, Meriden. There will be no calling hours and burial will be private. In lieu of flowers, expressions of sympathy in her memory may be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105. Arrangements are under the direction of the John J. Ferry & Sons Funeral Home, 88 E. Main St., Meriden, CT 06450. For online condolences, please visit jferryfh.com. Please sign guestbook at courant.com/obituaries

Quinlan, Edward



Edward Quinlan, 75, died at home in West Hartford on December 2nd. His wife of 30 years, Susan (nee Sheffs), 68, and his son, Conor, 28, were by his side in his final moments. Throughout his life, Ed was a dedicated public servant, a loving family member, a passionate woodworker and seaman. Edward was born to Francis and Laura Quinlan in Newark, New Jersey on December 9th, 1945, the oldest of six children. After graduating from high school, he attended St. Mary's of the Plains in Kansas, where he majored in English. He joined the Peace Corps shortly after and taught English in Libya. Upon his return to the States, he began teaching English and History in Hartford, where he also earned a Masters in Urban Education through the University of Hartford.

Ed's career in public service continued when he joined Connecticut's Department of Correction. In his position as Director of Community Services, he spearheaded efforts to fight the effects of mass incarceration and to help those returning from prison integrate back into their communities. As a public servant, Ed believed the government's obligation was to provide for all its citizens and treat them with dignity. He often referred to a plaque on his office that read "Thou Shalt Not Stand Idly By," a philosophy he incorporated into every aspect of his life.

After his retirement from Corrections, he joined Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Connecticut as VP of Counseling Services. He later worked at Woodcraft, Inc in Manchester Connecticut, where he labored to make an avocation into a vocation. In his retirement, he searched for the same purpose he found in his career. Eventually, he joined the Malta Justice Initiative. He served on the writing committee for their book "The Justice Imperative." He also spent his time pursuing his passions and interests: reading about history, politics and science, creating fine furniture and sailing the New England shore.

Along with his beloved wife and son, Ed leaves behind his siblings, sisters Jane and Laura, and brothers, Jerome (Beth), James, Dan (Pat). He also leaves his wife's sisters Sally Sheffs and Cindy McGinty. He is survived by his nephews, Noah and Ryan Quinlan and Daniel (Jacqueline Jordan) and David McGinty, and his nieces Julia and Anna Quinlan. Over the course of his life, he made countless friends and acquaintances whose company he treasured and enjoyed.

The family would like to thank our precious circle of family and friends for all their love, help and support that afforded Eddie the opportunity to be at home during his illness.

A celebration of life and burial will be at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of sending flowers, the family asks donations be made to the non-profits The Connecticut Mirror or The Connecticut Bail Fund.

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Pegorer, Catherine

Catherine Pegorer, 66, lost her battle with congenital heart disease and passed away on November 30th, 2021. Born with Hypertrophic Cardio myopathy with Obstruction, the condition would impact every aspect of her life. By the time she was 30 years old, she had undergone open heart surgery to replace her mitral heart valve, had a septal myectomy and would be placed on blood thinners for the rest of her life. Still she persevered, working full time and attending evening classes to complete her Bachelor's and Master's degree in Business Administration graduating Magna Cum Laude. She was employed for many years at Traveler's Insurance Company; her final position was Director of Pricing for Auto and Homeowners Insurance in the Actuarial Department. She stayed there until she suffered a severe stroke at age 45 and was disabled for the remainder of her life. She would go on to suffer from Congestive Heart Failure for many years until most recently when she suffered a hemorrhagic stroke due to long term use of blood thinners. Through it all, her family was there by her side. Her sister, Rose was her constant support and in later years, her devoted caregiver. Catherine will be sorely missed by all who knew her. She had a heart of gold and would do anything for anyone. Her keen wit and wry humor always made everyone smile. She has joined her father, mother and dear son along with the rest of her deceased extended family who were all waiting at the pearly gates to welcome her. Catherine was predeceased by her parents, Antonio and Emma Pegorer, and her son, Christopher Glass. She leaves behind her beloved sister, Rose Pegorer, her beloved grandson, Nico Glass, her dear cousins who were always there for her, Frani Morello, Rose Kuhl, and Rose Poirier, and Nico's mom, Tristiana Johnson along with other cousins, aunts, uncles and friends. Graveside services will be private in St. Sebastian Cemetery, Middlefield. Catherine will be remembered along with Emma Pegorer and Christopher Glass at an 11:00 a.m. Mass on December 12th at St. Sebastian Church, Middletown. The Coughlin-Lastrina Funeral Home, 491 High St, Middletown, is in charge of arrangements. In lieu of flowers, we ask that you make any donations to the American Heart Association to fund research to prevent and improve outcomes for heart disease and stroke. As a final note, we hope Catherine finds heaven to have streets that are lined with Broadway Theaters, 5th Avenue shops, Jewelry stores and the best restaurants in between. That would make her happy forever. See you later, Cath.

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Egelhofer, Gloria Anderson



Gloria Anderson Egelhofer, of Chester, formerly of Old Saybrook, passed away on December 4, 2021 after a brief illness. She was born on May 7, 1929, in Brooklyn, NY to Ingrid (Larson) and Theobolder Anderson. Gloria was a graduate of Beaver College in Pennsylvania with a degree in Art. Married in 1951 to Arthur Egelhofer, Gloria lived most of her life in Old Saybrook. While primarily a homemaker, Gloria had an artist's eye, and worked for some years as an interior decorator. A member of the Old Saybrook Garden Club, she won numerous awards for flower arranging. Gloria and Art were founding members of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Old Saybrook, where both were active for many years. Gloria loved music; she played the piano and sang in the church choir. She leaves her husband, Arthur, of seventy years; three children—John (Janet) of Lenox, MA, David (Diane) of Vienna, VA, and Nancy of Warwick, RI—as well as four grandchildren (James Egelhofer, Kathryn Medow, David Egelhofer, and Jonathan Egelhofer) and three great-grandchildren. A celebration of her life is planned for the spring. Memorial donations may be made to St. Paul Lutheran Church, 56 Great Hammock Road, Old Saybrook, CT 06475. To sign the online guest book visit www.swan-funeralhomeoldsaybrook.com. Please sign guestbook at courant.com/obituaries

Visit the obituary section on
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memories of loved ones.

OBITUARIES

Moriarty, Anna R



Anna R. Moriarty, 87, of Farmington, formerly of Manchester, the beloved wife of Thomas F. Moriarty, Jr. died Friday, December 3, 2021 at her home surrounded by her family. Born in West Hazelton, PA she was the daughter of the late John and Anna (Gergley) Refowich and lived in Manchester for many years. First and foremost Anna was a

loving and dedicated wife, mother, and grandmother who always put her family first. She began her life's work at Shriner's Hospital. When her life took root in Manchester she worked at the Meadows Nursing home. She eventually retired from Manchester Manor as a nurse's aide after many years of compassionate service. Anna was a longtime dedicated communicant of the Church of the Assumption and was a member of their choir which was a source of her friendships and joy in her life. She was also a longtime member of the Mothers Circle of St. Bridget Church and often spoke of the beautiful, strong, and loving women in her group. Anna and Tom loved to spend time square dancing with their friends, playing bridge and bocci, and taking their family on memorable camping trips throughout the east coast. During Anna and Tom's retirement years they spent the winters in Florida where they opened their home to family and friends who wanted to get away from the cold weather. In their later years they moved to Farmington.

In addition to her loving husband, she is survived by her children Anna Grappone and her husband Ronald, Maureen Moriarty-Palmieri and her husband Michael, Tom Moriarty and his wife Evelyn Marren, and Philip Moriarty and his wife Sharon; her grandchildren Monica, Michael, Zachary, Thomas, Mirtnes, Noah and Sawyer; and numerous nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her beloved brothers Michael and Steve Refowich, her sister Mary Loop, and her beagle, Mandy.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Thursday, December 9th at 11 am at the Church of the Assumption 29 Adams St. South, Manchester followed by a private burial in Buckland Cemetery. Family and friends may call at the John F. Tierney Funeral Home 219 West Center St. Manchester on Wednesday from 4-7 pm. For online condolences please visit www.tierneyfuneralhome.com.

JOHN F.
Tierney
TIERNEYFUNERALHOME.COM

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Kane, Robert

Robert Kane, 33, of Collinsville, formerly of Southington, loving husband, son and devoted father, left his family and friends heartbroken upon his unexpected passing on Thursday, December 2, 2021. He was the husband and best friend of Amanda (Liburdi) Kane for the past five years.

Born in South Korea on September 12, 1988, he was the son of John and Lauren (Rapponotti) Kane of Southington. Raised and education in Southington, Bobby, as he was known to many, was a graduate of Southington High School, and received his Bachelor's in Graphic Design from C.C.S.U. The consummate "techy", he was currently working for SwingU, which prompted his new-found hobby of golf. Known for his love for music, he was a talented, self-taught guitarist, and could master most instruments that he picked up. Bobby was an accomplished and imaginative artist of many platforms, including music, woodworking, photography and videography; most recently embracing the arts of grilling and brewing coffee. Above all, he was a fun-loving husband full of well-thought out surprises, love and laughter, and a hands-on Dad that rarely missed a moment. The admiration and love he had for his wife, two boys, his family and friends was beyond compare. Remembered for his creativity, his profound kindness and ability to spread humor through impersonations, Bobby will be missed beyond words. In addition to his parents John and Lauren, and his wife Amanda, he leaves adored sons who brought him so much joy, Owen and Miller; his sister, Lisa Kane; his mother and father-in-law, Lois and Mario Liburdi; his sister-in-law, Marissa Venturo and her husband, Andy; and many aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.

In lieu of flowers, Bobby's love for his children may be remembered with contributions for their future education at any branch of American Eagle Financial Credit Union.

A celebration of Bobby's life will be held on Thursday at 11:00 a.m. at Plainville Funeral Home, 81 Broad St, Plainville. Family and friends may gather on Wednesday, from 4-7 p.m. at the funeral home. For online expressions of sympathy, please visit www.PlainvilleFuneralHome.com

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Garrahy, Annemarie "Ammer"



Annemarie "Ammer" Garrahy, 50, of Rocky Hill, passed away on November 30, 2021 after a two-year battle with Cancer. She was born in Hartford, son of the late Edward P. and Elaine (Jabs) Garrahy. After graduating from Rocky Hill High School and then Trinity College, Ammer set about experiencing the world through travel and wildly diverse career adventures. Her resume includes the Sierra Club, an NGO refugee resettlement program, a horse stable, a San Francisco internet tech startup, and an engineering firm where she worked as an electrical technician installing control systems on large merchant vessels in shipyards around the world. An incessant explorer, she travelled extensively through Africa, South America, Southern Europe, Central America, and Asia. While living in San Francisco, she became a proficient white-water guide, and rafted many of the great western rivers. Ammer also volunteered with the Red Cross and, while living in Portland, OR, for the Pacific Pug Rescue. Several of her family and friends put into words how many remember her with, "a smile that lit up a room, a contagious laugh, a beautiful spirit and an infectious personality that could make anyone she met feel welcome."

She is survived by her sister and brothers, Kate Garrahy of Rocky Hill, Edward P. Garrahy, Jr and his wife Kathleen of Seattle, WA and Patrick Garrahy and his wife Melissa of Mansfield, MA, as well as nieces Emma, Caitlyn, and Adeline, nephew Daniel, and her beloved pug Hugo. Besides her parents, Ammer is predeceased by her brother-in-law, Mike Wilcox.

A Memorial Service will be held on Friday December 10, 2021, at 11:00 am in the Farley-Sullivan Funeral Home, 34 Beaver Rd, Wethersfield. Masks required. Burial will follow in Center Cemetery, Main Street, Rocky Hill. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her name to the Pacific Pug Rescue of Beaverton, OR (<https://www.pacificpugrescue.org/>). For further information, or to leave a condolence, please visit FarleySullivan.com

Farley-Sullivan
Funeral Home

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Shephard, Denise Darlene



Denise Darlene Shephard lovingly known as "Nisey", 69, of Hartford, CT entered into eternal rest on Monday, November 29th, 2021. Denise was born to the late Elbert and Mary Shephard on March 25, 1952 in Hartford, CT. She leaves to cherish her memories her only child, Deana Byrd and a host of other relatives and friends.

A celebration of life for Denise will take place on Wednesday, December 8, 2021 at 3:00pm with a visitation from 2:00pm – 3:00pm at Henry L. Fuqua Funeral Service (A Division of Howard K. Hill Funeral Services), 94 Granby Street, Bloomfield, CT 06002. To leave a message of comfort for the Shephard family or view full obituary please visit, www.hkhfuneralservices.com

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Damato, Dr. Eric M.



Dr. Eric M. Damato, 45, of South Glastonbury, passed away on Wednesday, December 1, 2021. He is the beloved husband of Cheryl Damato. Born in Hartford, son of Diane (Sheaffer) Damato of Glastonbury and the late Michael T. Damato, he graduated from Glastonbury High School and is a longtime resident. Eric

graduated from Wagner College and went on to graduate cum laude from Life University College of Chiropractic. He went on to work with Community Chiropractic Care in Springfield in 2001. He then worked with Carbone Chiropractic prior to opening Damato Chiropractic Center in Newington in 2004. One of Eric's greatest accomplishments was in 2009 when he became the official chiropractor for the Hartford Wolf Pack. After 12 seasons with the Wolfpack, Eric opened up our sports division Midlign Sports Chiropractic. In 2020, Eric expanded Midlign to become the official chiropractor of the Hartford Athletic soccer team and in the same year, the Hartford Yard Goats. He is known for his generosity. He enjoys good cigars, bourbon, cribbage, listening to music and attending concerts. He loves to travel with Cheryl and view the beautiful landscapes the country had to offer. Their favorite trip is an annual Key West visit. He also enjoys spending time with his kids, bringing them fishing or out to breakfast. Eric is a lovable teddy bear, bringing everyone together with his sense of humor, compassion and enormous heart. This is a tremendous loss for all who knew him. Along with his wife, he leaves his children, Kathryn Damato of Newington, Joseph Damato of Newington, Hayden Connolly of South Glastonbury and Alayna Connolly of South Glastonbury. He also leaves his three brothers, Gregory Damato and his wife Hillary of Costa Rica, Nicholas Damato of Glastonbury and Michael Damato of Manchester, other extended family and all of his many "go-to" guys. A Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday, December 19th promptly at 4:00 p.m. at 123 Lowrey Place, Newington, CT 06111. Duksa Family Funeral Homes at Newington Memorial, 20 Bonair Ave., Newington is serving his family. A trust for Eric's four children has been created. Memorial donations may be made to Raymond James and mailed to Capitol Securities Management at 11 Naubuc Ave., Glastonbury, CT 06033. To share a memory or condolence, please visit us at www.duksa.net.

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Williams Jr, William L

William "Bill" Lloyd Williams, Jr., passed away on November 29, 2021, at the age of 74. He was born on August 5, 1947 to William "Jack" Lloyd Williams, Sr. and Marie Roach Williams. Bill grew up in West Chester, Pennsylvania. He served with distinction in Vietnam as a 1st Lieutenant in the Engineering Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division, U.S. Army, receiving the Bronze Star on three occasions. Upon his honorable discharge, he became active in Vietnam Veterans Against the War and gave testimony before U.S. Congress advocating for a withdrawal of U.S. forces and an end to hostilities in Vietnam. Bill returned to his studies at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, earning his Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. While a student, he met Merrillyn Stowe, whom he married on June 9, 1973. He began his career as a research engineer for Texaco in Houston, Texas. After moving to South Windsor, Connecticut in 1978 he operated his own company Underground Construction & Survey for 30 years. Upon retirement, Bill and Merrillyn relocated to Bryson City, North Carolina, where they lived for the past 10 years. Bill enjoyed a variety of interests and hobbies. As a youth he was a gifted athlete, playing baseball and football in high school and rugby in college. Bill developed a passion for golf, scuba-diving, and white water kayaking later in life, and he and Merrillyn traveled to distant locations in search of new adventures. He loved nature and the outdoors, from gardening and beekeeping to hiking and birdwatching. In Bryson City he served as president of the Smoky Mountain Beekeepers Association and was active in the bee school and mentoring new beekeepers. He worked with a local veterans' group to petition the state legislature to dedicate a highway bridge to decorated Vietnam veteran Dockie Brendle. Bill is survived by his wife, Merrillyn, and his three sons and their spouses: Eli and Anna, William "Jake" and Rebecca, and George Matthew and Sarah. His grandchildren are Jack, Noelle, Mira, Henry, and George. Other survivors are his sister Constance, her husband John, and their children Christina and Jason, and his nephews Richard and Andrew, the children of his late sister Diana. He will be greatly missed by his family and many friends.

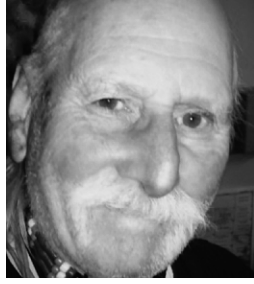
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Miselis, Robert J

Robert J. Miselis, 67, of Gold Canyon, AZ, formerly of Enfield, beloved husband of Judy (Sorensen) Miselis, passed away at home on Sunday, November 28, 2021, surrounded by his family and friends after a short battle with cancer. He was born in Brooklyn, NY on May 13, 1954 son of the late Chester and Barbara (Toman) Miselis. Robert grew up in Bristol, CT before moving to West Hartford and Enfield. 12 years ago, he fulfilled his longtime dream of moving out west where he acquired many dear friends. He was a sports fanatic, supporting his favorite teams, the Red Sox, Patriots, Celtics and Bruins, and an avid collector of sports memorabilia. Robert cherished time spent with family and friends in his desert home. In addition to his beloved wife Judy, Robert is survived by his children, Ashley Thompson and her husband Joshua, and Robert Miselis and his significant other Taylor Corsini, both of Windsor Locks; his grandchildren, Austin and Jonathan Thompson; and his brothers, James and Meri Miselis of Glastonbury, and Peter and Mary Miselis of Port Washington, NY as well as many nieces and nephews. Robert's family will receive relatives and friends from 9:30 to 11:30 am on Friday, December 10, 2021 at the Windsor Locks Funeral Home, 441 Spring St, Windsor Locks. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 12 pm at St. Mary Church. Burial will follow in Grove Cemetery. Donations in Robert's memory may be made to Hospice of the Valley, 1510 E. Flower, Phoenix, AZ 85014, or at hvv.org. For online condolences, please visit www.windsorlocksfuneralhome.com.

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Sheftel, Robert



Robert "Bruce" Grey Bear Sheftel, 81, died Sunday, December 5, 2021, at his home surrounded by family. Born in Brooklyn, NY he was the son of the late Albert R. and Irene (Fortin) Sheftel and had lived in Manchester and Vernon for many years.

Bruce is predeceased by the two loves of his life Beatrice Kathryn Sheftel and Patricia Gentle Rain Sanden.

He is survived by his son Robert Sheftel and his wife Kara of Manchester; his step-daughter and caretaker Linnea Madore and her husband Rick of Manchester; and his grandchildren Reillyn, Mackenzie, and Randall. Bruce had two brothers, Richard Sheftel and a brother by choice Giving Elk.

He was blessed with countless friends across the many communities where he was welcomed including the First Nation Tribe of the Metis and the Nipmuc community out of Holland Massachusetts.

Bruce had retired from the Town of Manchester Public Works Department and later loved his job as a school crossing guard in his retirement. He worked on Wall Street, designed dresses, and was one of the last employees of the famed Cheney Mills.

As a historian, Bruce was often able to provide little known insight on Revolutionary and Civil War history. As an artist his traditional beadwork and historically accurate moccasins were on display in museums.

Family and friends may call at the John F. Tierney Funeral Home 219 West Center St. Manchester on Thursday, December 9th from 4-7 pm. A funeral service will be held on Friday, December 10th, at 11 am at St. Mary Church 41 Park St. Manchester, followed by burial in East Cemetery. For online condolences, please visit www.tierneyfuneralhome.com.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the Michael J. Fox Foundation to assist in the fight against Parkinson's at P.O. Box 5014, Hagerstown, MD 21741-5014.

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Levine, Mark Norman



Mark Norman Levine, 81, a long time West Hartford resident, passed away peacefully on December 3, 2021, surrounded by his family. Born in Hartford, Mark attended William H. Hall High School and Boston University. He met the love of his life, Shirley, at a high school dance, and they were married for 58 wonderful years. Mark

had a long career as a stock broker. He then became president of Jacob Fox & Son in Hartford, a metal and newspaper recycling business, founded by his wife's grandfather in the early years of recycling in this country. He later was a co-founder of Atlas Fox Recycling, a tire recycling business, in the 1980s. Mark was an avid golfer and enjoyed weekend golf games with his buddies and with his children. He was a diehard fan of UCONN basketball (men's and women's), the New York Giants and the Boston Red Sox, even traveling to March Madness and American League pennant games when his teams were in the hunt. Mark relished coaching his son's hockey team back in the day, and he was a loyal Hartford Whalers season ticketholder, who never got over their leaving Connecticut. His appreciation of music, including playing the drums, was passed down to his children and grandchildren. His favorite meal was a good steak, a coca cola, and chocolate cake with chocolate ice cream. He lived his life with an optimistic, glass half full attitude, loved a good laugh and was very proud of his children's and grandchildren's accomplishments. Mark is survived by his devoted wife Shirley Fox Levine, his children, Andrea Levine, Eric and daughter-in-law Wendy Levine, and his grandchildren, Alexis and Tyler Levine. His family is very grateful to Dr. Mark Dailey and his entire team at Hartford Healthcare, whose kindness and compassion knows no bounds. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Beauty Bus Foundation, 21781 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 586, Woodland Hills, CA 91364 (www.beautybus.org) or Susan G. Komen, Attn: MA 300, 13770 Noel Road, Suite 801889, Dallas, TX 75380 (www.komenct.org). Private services, entrusted to Weinstein's Mortuary, were held on December 5, 2021.

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Mozzer, William F



We celebrate with love and joy the life of William (Bill) Mozzer 84 of Essex, Connecticut, who passed away December 2, 2021. Bill was born in Manchester, CT, the son of William Mozzer and Anna Pakalnis Mozzer. He is sadly missed by his loving wife BetteLou Mozzer, his children Brian Mozzer and wife Karen Mozzer of

Ellington, Kerilyn Czaplicki of Barrington, R.I., Todd Mozzer of Jackson, Montana, Tracy Bogner and husband David Bogner of Manchester, CT and Dean Sullivan of Hebron, his brother Dennis Mozzer and wife Judi of East Harwich, MA and sister Joyce Lemire and husband Gary Lemire of Eastham, MA, 12 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren plus numerous devoted friends. He will best be remembered for his wonderful personality and strength of character. Bills lifetime career was in the car industry and he received numerous certificates of achievement for management. He played softball with The East Hartford Dovelets (the oldest "fast pitch" softball team in the country). He was an avid follower of UCONN women's and men's basketball, The NY Yankees and The Giants. He enjoyed golf trips with friends, reading, audiobooks when he lost his sight as well as getting together with friends for any reason. A service will be held for him on December 13, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. at The First Church of Christ in Saybrook, 366 Main Street, Old Saybrook, CT. In lieu of flowers, please make your own personal donation to the charity of your choice.

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Schand, Iyana



The family of Iyana Schand announces with great sorrow her passing on November 22, 2021. Iyana was born on January 22, 1979 in Hartford, CT. A viewing for Iyana is planned for Friday, December 10, 2021 at the Henry L. Fuqua Funeral Service (A Division of Howard K. Hill Funeral Services) at 10:00 am – 11:00 am in Bloomfield, CT. Her

Celebration of Life is to follow immediately after at 11:00 am. To view the full obituary please visit, www.hkhfuneralservices.com

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OBITUARIES

Green, Doris Marie (Hall)

Doris Marie (Hall) Green, 95, wife of the late Edward N. Green, died surrounded by her loving family on Dec. 6th. Daughter of the late Clara (McKeever) and John Hall, she was born on April 10, 1926 in Norwalk.

Doris found her passion in her family and loved ones, always offering her care, concern, and a friendly hug. She was known for her humor and lighthearted demeanor. She also had a great love of music and playing the organ.

Doris is survived by her loving family; a son and daughter-in-law, Peter and Karen Green of Ottsville, Pennsylvania, daughter Patricia Green of Middletown, and daughter and son-in-law Nancy and Larry Bachman of Stevens, Pennsylvania. She also leaves her beloved grandchildren, Amber Clark of Colorado, Luke Clark of Pennsylvania, Tara Salvadori of Berlin, Stacey Czepiel of Colchester, Miranda Bashjian of Pennsylvania, Krista Lastrina of Middletown, and Tiffany Poirrier of Pennsylvania, as well as seventeen beloved great grandchildren, Kristina, Nickolas, Mia, Jaeden, Kaydence, Lena, Ava, Cheyan, Jesse, Alessandra, Naomi, Joel, Liana, Cecilia, Ryan, Michael, and Astrid, as well as a great-great granddaughter, Vera. She also leaves behind her sister, Shirley Erickson of Delaware and brother-in-law, James Green of New Jersey. She was pre-deceased by her brother, Robert Hall.

Funeral services will be held on Saturday, December 11th at 10 a.m. from the Coughlin-Lastrina Funeral Home, 491 High St., Middletown. Burial will be in the family plot in the Indian Hill Cemetery, Middletown. Friends may call at the funeral home on Friday, December 10th from 5 to 7 p.m.

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MacDonald, Ruth-Ellen (Scott)



Ruth-Ellen Scott MacDonald, 80, of Lakeland, FL passed away on December 2, 2021 at Lakeland Regional Medical Center following a brief illness.

Ruth was born on October 7, 1941, to George Joseph Scott Sr and Harriet Wheeler Scott. She graduated from East Hartford High School and was an active participant at Center Church in Hartford



during her younger years. She was particularly fond of the memories made during her involvement at Camp Asto Wamah in Columbia, CT.

While residing in Pawcatuck, CT, Ruth worked for the Naval Submarine Base in Groton before retiring and eventually following her dream to live in Florida.

Ruth was a tenacious, independent woman who enjoyed travel, playing cards, and genealogy research. She was an active member and Worthy Advisor of Rainbow Girls through Center Church in her younger years and was a past member of the DAR later in life which she was very proud of.

Ruth will be lovingly missed by her family, which includes her daughter, Debra MacDonald DeFauw, (Julius), of Bettendorf, IA, sister, Janet Aieta (Philip) of Tolland, CT, grandchildren Jonathan and Sarah DeFauw of Bettendorf, IA, nieces Andrea Chiaradio of Pawcatuck, CT, and Melissa Maglieri of Andover, CT, great-niece, McKenzie Savage of Accord, NY and great-nephew Braden Bariteau of Pawcatuck, CT. She will forever hold a place in our hearts.

Ruth was predeceased by her parents, George Joseph Scott Sr and Harriet Wheeler Scott as well as a brother, George Scott, Jr.

There will be no calling hours and services will be private at the behest of the family.

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Williams, Errol Reynald



Errol Reynald Williams, 55, of Bloomfield, transitioned Thursday, December 2, 2021, surrounded by his loving family. Errol was born December 17, 1965, in Birmingham, Alabama to Robbie Harrison, and the late Errol Williams. In addition to his mother, he leaves to cherish his memories, his son Demetrius Williams, and his sister Angela

Pope and her husband Augustus. Funeral services will be held 11am on Friday, December 10, 2021, at The Lodge Community Chapel, 130 Deerfield Road, Windsor. The family will receive friends prior from 10am-11am. For the complete obituary and online condolences visit www.carmonfuneralhome.com



CARMON
Community Funeral Homes

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Brooks, Grayce A. (Ahern)

A sixty-five year resident of Deep River died on December 4, 2021. She was the widow of Harvey James Brooks of Deep River and was born June 3, 1932 in Middletown, the only child of John James (Jack) Ahern and Belinda Kathryn Obrien Ahern.

Grayce was a proud graduate of Middletown High School, Class of 1950, and attended Briarcliff Junior College. She was secretary to the Vice President and Treasurer of Wesleyan University for five years. As a resident of Deep River she was President of the PTA for two years, served as den mother for Pack 17, and was a trustee of the Deep River Historical Society for seventeen years. She was also an active member of the Old Saybrook Racquet Club for thirty-four years.

Grayce took great joy in her children and their families. She is survived by her son Douglas Brooks and his wife Catherine Wood Brooks of Vermont; her daughter-in-law Nancy Rios-Brooks of Old San Juan, Puerto Rico and children Fernando Ojeda Rios III (Katy Dowling, daughters Josephine and Lucia), John James (Jack) Rios-Brooks, and Elisabeth Grayce Rios-Brooks. She was pre-deceased in 2014 by her oldest son David Clark Brooks.

A graveside service will be held at a later date at the Brooks Family plot in the Vista section of Fountain Hill Cemetery. In lieu of flowers contributions may be sent to the Deep River Historical Society and the Friends of the Deep River Library.

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Williams , Patricia Mae



Patricia Mae Williams, 73 of West Hartford, CT passed away on January 13, 2021 and at that time we were not able to gather "in person" to celebrate her life. Join us on December 8th, 2021 at 6pm for "A Birthday Gone Home Celebration" to be held at The First Cathedral, 1151 Blue Hills Avenue, Bloomfield, CT 06002. Patricia Williams

believed in people and community and the value and strength therein; regardless of status or stature. Come join us in celebration. In lieu of flowers please consider contributing to the Patricia Williams Scholarship Fund. Checks should be made out to Upper Albany Neighborhood Collaborative (UANC), 1229 Albany Avenue, Hartford, CT 06112.

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Nemeth, David A.

David A. Nemeth, husband of Shelia (Kelly) Nemeth, passed away after a brief hospitalization preceded by lengthy health issues on Saturday December 4, 2021, at the Hospital of Central Connecticut in New Britain. Born in Bridgeport, CT on December 10, 1949, to the late John B. Nemeth and Rose Shedlock Nemeth. David was employed by Jonal Laboratories before his early retirement due to his health. David enjoyed traveling, good food and a hearty laugh.

In addition to his wife, Shelia, he is survived by his brother Marc and his wife Jean Nemeth of Berlin and his 3 loving nieces Miriam, Amelia and Haley. He will be missed by his community at Complete Care of Meriden. He will also be remembered fondly by his dog, Daisy. A funeral service will be held on Tuesday, December 7th at 2pm at the John J. Ferry & Sons Funeral Home, 88 E. Main St., Meriden, CT 06450. Burial will follow in B'Nai Abraham Cemetery in Meriden. Shiva will be held through Wednesday evening. There will be no calling hours. Contributions in his memory may be made to the Meriden Humane Society, 311 Murdock Ave, Meriden, CT 06450. For online condolences, please visit jerryfth.com.

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Barrera, Stephen M

Stephen Michael Barrera was born on March 18, 1951, in Manchester, CT. and passed away on Nov. 30, 2021. He lived in Manchester for most of his life, and was well-known and well-liked by his neighbors and friends up and down Main St. Mike enjoyed bowling, and playing bingo and the lottery, as well as feeding the local squirrels. Mike was predeceased by his father Ettore "Mush" Barrera and his mother, Mildred (Smith Barrera) Longtin as well as his aunts, uncles and cousins Chuck and David Barrera. Mike leaves 4 half-sisters, Linda (Robert) Watson of MO., Dawn (Bill) Denslow of CT., and Jeanine and Robin Longtin, both of FL., as well as his cousins Dianne, Rob and Sheila Saunders, and Jane Barrera, and several nieces and nephews. Mike's unique presence in the world will be missed by his friends and family alike. There will be a graveside service Wednesday, Dec. 8, at 11:00 AM at St. James Cemetery in Manchester. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in Mike's name to Family Support Team, 96 Skyline Drive, E. Hartford, CT. 06118. For online condolences, please visit www.tierneyfuneralhome.com

JOHN F.
Tierney
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










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CORONAVIRUS IN CONNECTICUT

Omicron sparks renewed concerns

Lamont warns residents to 'be careful' as public events, gatherings are canceled across the state

By Christopher Arnott
Hartford Courant

Public gatherings and events around the state are being canceled due to concerns about omicron just days after the weekend announcement that the new COVID-19 variant had been identified in Connecticut.

Omicron, thought to be more contagious than the original and delta strains has sparked renewed concerns and precautions about the coronavirus, which has put

arts, sports and other events on and off-and-on hiatus since the spring of 2020.

"There's no question about it, especially folks of a certain age: Stay out of contagious situations," Gov. Ned Lamont advised Sunday morning on CBS' "Face the Nation." "We just don't know enough about this variant. Be careful."

The cancellations and postponements began Monday. The Mohegan Sun announced the Earth, Wind & Fire show scheduled for

Friday at the arena is being postponed "out of an abundance of caution for health and safety."

The American Hockey League announced that the Hartford Wolf Pack's game on Wednesday against the Belleville Senators will not be played due to "league COVID-19 protocols affecting the Wolf Pack." Wolf Pack games on Dec. 1, 3 and 4 had previously been postponed.

The annual Hartford Blooms Holiday Church tour scheduled for Saturday has been postponed "due to the increasing spread of the Omicron variant of Covid," the organization said Monday. "We'll be putting all of our efforts into making an even more spectacu-

lar Hartford Blooms Garden Tour in the Spring 2022." Refunds are being offered.

Citing "an abundance of caution" as well as "a directive from the university," on Monday morning, UConn's Connecticut Repertory Theatre announced that it was canceling its Dec. 2-12 run of the sociopolitical drama "Food for the Gods." The theater had only recently returned to live public performances, and "Food for the Gods" had already drastically reduced the size of its audiences. The play was to be performed by UConn students.

The cancellations come just as audiences were starting to

reemerge for live performances at the major Connecticut theaters and concert halls. This past week saw openings of new shows at Hartford Stage, TheaterWorks and Playhouse on Park as well as a Hartford Symphony Orchestra concert at The Bushnell.

The long-hoped-for return of major employers to Hartford's downtown is also being impacted. The Hartford Financial Services Group said Thursday it would delay plans to have senior leaders return to the insurance company's downtown office, in response to omicron's arrival.

Turn to Omicron, Page 2

Group home OK'd in Wolcott

After pressure, plans for mentally disabled seniors move forward

By Edmund H. Mahony
Hartford Courant

The town of Wolcott will rescind a new zoning ordinance and permit the operation of a widely opposed group home for mentally disabled senior citizens in a residential neighborhood in order to settle a housing discrimination suit by the federal government and the home operators.

Wolcott's decision comes just weeks after a federal jury, in a similar case involving opposition by Cromwell to a group home near a municipal school complex, ruled against that town and gave the group home operators there a remarkably high, \$5 million punitive damage award. Another housing dispute is growing and could move to court in Danbury, where neighbors are trying to block the permanent conversion of a motel purchased by the state to a homeless shelter.

In the Wolcott case, the town agreed under the settlement to pay \$10,000 to the federal government and another \$350,000 to group home operator SELF and a real estate company that will lease the remodeled group home at 159 Old Bound Line Road to SELF.

The federal government, which enforces anti-discrimination provisions in federal housing law, praised the settlement, in which it took the lead.

"Towns don't have the right to enact zoning laws that make housing for persons with disabilities unavailable," said Principal Deputy Secretary Demetria McCain of the U.S. department of Housing and Urban Development. "HUD commends the Department of Justice for holding municipalities accountable for violating our nation's housing laws and we look forward

Turn to Home, Page 2



Gov. Ned Lamont encourages residents to get vaccinated on Monday at Union Station in New Haven. ELIZA FAWCETT/HARTFORD COURANT

AS CASES SURGE, BOOSTERS URGED

With more clinics popping up, health officials, politicians encourage vaccines

By Eliza Fawcett
Hartford Courant

As Connecticut faces a surge in COVID-19 cases and the omicron variant begins to emerge in the state, health officials and politicians on Monday urged residents to get vaccinated and boosted.

"Especially with omicron and the increase in spread around the state and the region, please, please, please, get vaccinated, get

your boosters," New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker said at New Haven Union Station, where a pop-up vaccine clinic had been set up to vaccinate travelers against the coronavirus. Similar clinics are currently open at the New Haven Public Library, Bradley Airport and other locations across the state.

The state's current spike in COVID-19 cases should propel residents to seek out booster

shots, said Connecticut Department of Public Health Commissioner Dr. Manisha Juthani.

"There is no motivator for protecting yourself greater than fear of infection," she said.

In recent weeks, Connecticut's COVID-19 metrics have risen significantly. As of Friday, the state's weekly positivity rate stood at 5.63%, its highest point since Jan. 18. The delta variant of COVID-19 remains responsible

for the overwhelming majority of the state's COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations.

"It's been 19 months since COVID entered our state. Nineteen months," president and CEO of Griffin Hospital Patrick A. Charnel said. "This has been a marathon. I know we're all tired. We're losing focus, and now is the time to redouble our efforts."

Turn to Vaccine, Page 2

"It's been 19 months since COVID entered our state. Nineteen months. This has been a marathon. I know we're all tired. We're losing focus, and now is the time to redouble our efforts."

— Patrick A. Charnel, president and CEO of Griffin Hospital

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

'I knew that I would be kind of like a unicorn'

Connecticut Democrats are a 'big tent' — but is it big enough for an anti-abortion candidate?

By Mark Pazniokas
CT Mirror

For a Democratic Party dispirited by the resignation of a young state lawmaker facing corruption charges, the willingness of 27-year-old Councilwoman Treneé McGee to seek the open seat seemed like a gift.

But the nomination of McGee, a motivational speaker and daughter of clergy, is testing the degree to which Democrats can comfortably accommodate a candidate at odds with the party on the issue of the moment: abortion.

"I consider myself pro-life for the whole life, from the womb to

the tomb," McGee said.

While polls show voters to be more flexible, the two parties now occupy clear places on abortion rights in terms of platforms and top-of-ticket candidates, with Democrats branded as being in favor of abortion rights and Republicans being anti-abortion.

But McGee said she never considered joining the Republican Party when she came of age.

"Not really, because I knew instantly that I'm against the death penalty, euthanasia," McGee said. "I believe in quality health care for everyone. I believe students

Turn to McGee, Page 2



West Haven Councilwoman Treneé McGee is running for the General Assembly in a special election later this month. While a Democrat, she opposes abortion. MARK PAZNIOKAS/CT MIRROR

Avon to get self-serve craft beer taproom

Try-It will be first of its kind in central Connecticut

By Don Stacom
Hartford Courant

When the Tri-It Taproom in Avon opens next spring, customers will get to sample up to 44 IPAs, stouts or other craft beers or Connecticut wines — all without any help from a bartender.

The Tri-It aims become the first self-pour taproom in Connecticut, where self-serve alcohol businesses had been illegal until this year.

"To me, the beauty is you can sample all 44 if you like," owner Michelle Norris said. "You don't have to go to the grocery store and buy a brewery's four pack for 20 bucks, you can try a little. Or you can go straight for the one you like."

At least 44 other states allow self-service wine and beer dispensaries, and Connecticut's General Assembly this summer joined them.

Industry advocates contend that digital technology keeps patrons from over indulging; each customer gets a code that scans with every pour. It measures every time, and limits customers to 32 ounces in total.

Earlier this year, Mike Gallop opened a mobile self-pour taproom in western Connecticut. Gallop was an early supporter for legalizing self-pour beer and wine in the state, but it was only this summer when the General Assembly approved the concept.

Turn to Taproom, Page 2

CONNECTICUT



Doug Barber and his wife, Andrea Hawkins, who own Berkins Blend Café in Glastonbury, have taken over the cafe at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford. **COURTESY**

Wadsworth Atheneum cafe reopens under Berkins Blend

By Susan Dunne
Hartford Courant

The café at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art has reopened under new management and with a new service model. Berkins Blend Café of Glastonbury is running it, offering counter service rather than the table service that was offered until the museum and café closed temporarily as a result of the COVID pandemic.

Doug Barber, who co-owns Berkins Blend with his wife, Andréa Hawkins, soft-opened Berkins on Main on Dec. 2, the first day of the Festival of Trees and Traditions, the annual holiday fundraiser at the art museum at 600 Main St. in Hartford.

“It was a quick turnaround. There is a limited menu right now. We hope to evolve and progress to where we’re offering lunch service,” Barber said. “We hope to have a grand opening in the near future.”

The café offers coffee, tea and

pastries — croissants, muffins, coffee cake, brownies, buns, scones, etc. — made in-house at the Atheneum, with recipes used at the other Berkins shops. In addition to the mothership at 1003 Hebron Ave. in Glastonbury, Berkins also has a location at 21 Oak St. in Hartford.

When lunch service begins, it also will be counter service, with sandwiches, soups, yogurt, “protein packs” with meat and cheese, as well as beer and wine.

Berkins on Main is open noon to 4 p.m. Thursday to Sunday. Currently, the museum is open noon to 5 p.m. Thursday to Sunday.

When the museum expands its hours, so will the café, Barber said.

The Atheneum approached Hawkins, the immediate past president of the board of trustees at The Amistad Center for Art & Culture, which is inside the museum.

“She’s been associated with the Amistad for over 20 years, and they knew we had a café with a good reputation, so they reached out to

us,” Barber said.

Jeannette Dardenne, who is working with Berkins to open the cafe, said Hawkins left the Amistad board of trustees in advance of the opening of the café to avoid conflict of interest.

Michael Dudich, CFO and deputy director of operations at the Atheneum, said the museum was “just being pragmatic” to switch to a counter service model. “When we looked at food service in museums in the area, the move to fast casual was pretty prevalent,” Dudich said. “People tend to be pleased to walk up to a counter, get their order and grab a seat.”

Berkins also has taken over the catering service for events at the Atheneum, Barber said.

Until the pandemic began, the eatery was called Untitled Café and was run by Mill Restaurant Group.

For more information, see thewadsworth.org and berkinsblend.com.

Susan Dunne can be reached at sdunne@courant.com.

Taproom

from Page 1

Gallop is now a franchisee of Tapville, a Chicago-based self-service beer and wine distributor. Much like a food truck, his Tapville Mobile trailer has been booked to serve events and gatherings; it offers 16 taps.

Norris’ much larger business will operate in the former Truffles at 300 W. Main St., with a patio seating along with tables inside. She expects capacity will be about 65.

“We’re going to have 44 taps. We want to sell beers from the local breweries in Connecticut — we’ll rotate some in and out, and we’d like to showcase one brewery every month,” she said Monday.

Norris retired after 31 years in the I.T. field in Aiken, S. C., and relocated to New Hampshire. She and several relatives concluded that a self-pour taproom in Connecticut would be a hit.

“We had one in downtown Aiken so we know how they work,” she said.

Norris expects it will be May or

June before Tri-It is ready to open, with the delay largely the result of supply chain woes.

“We’re getting a long walk-in cooler that’s going to take 20 weeks at least,” she said.

Try-It’s investors laid out their case in a written business plan.

“In an ever-changing world, critical changes are coming to the bar industry. Technological advances are changing the way society interacts, and it is now going to change the experiential landscape for the growing population of craft beer consumers,” it said.

“Data shows that beer lovers have shed the traditional bar drinking experience and demand has grown for integrating alcoholic beverages in more experiential occasions. Beer festivals, brewpub visits, and outdoor activities are attracting a vast demographic of beer drinkers who are looking for a new and unique way to experience craft beer,” according to the plan.

Doing away with traditional bartenders reduces customers’ wait time for refills, and manufacturers of the automated pouring systems contend it nearly elimi-

nates revenue loss from spills or unauthorized “on the house” free drinks.

Each customer starts off showing ID and a credit card to receive a digital token — a wristband or perhaps a fob — programmed to allow up to 32 ounces. At each tap they scan the token and then pour; they’re charged by the ounce, while the system keeps a running total to be sure no customers exceeds the limit.

To go beyond 32 ounces, a customer would have to talk with a staffer, Norris said.

“I haven’t seen any issues in South Carolina with anybody being overserved — you still have that contact with the person if they want to extend it because they have to talk with you,” she said. “So that’s that same as it is with a bartender.”

Norris said the original plan was to have constantly running water spigots along the tap wall so patrons could quickly rinse their glass before trying a different beer.

“But with COVID, I’m thinking there will be shelves of glasses. You’ll probably have to change your glass each time,” she said.

Vaccine

from Page 1

Juthani emphasized that boosters immediately strengthen one’s immune system against COVID-19, counteracting the slowly-waning immunity of one’s initial vaccination.

The first few cases of omicron in Connecticut, reported over the weekend, appear to have resulted in mild symptoms among vaccinated people, Juthani noted. The state’s first case of the variant involved a Hartford County man in his 60s who developed mild symptoms in late November. His other family members are being tested for the variant, she said, and a few have developed non-severe COVID-19 symptoms.

“That is welcome news,” she said. “If we convert this disease into something where you cuddle up in blanket, if you’re vaccinated,

and stay home for a few days, and then get better, that is a success of the vaccines that kept you out of the hospital and kept you alive and well with your family this holiday season.”

While vaccinations may not always prevent mild illness, Gov. Ned Lamont said, “the boosters and the vaccines are keeping you out of the hospital and are keeping you out of the morgue.”

U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro emphasized that vaccine clinics across Connecticut administer free shots and do not require health insurance.

“No one will be turned away for lack of insurance,” she said.

The vaccine clinic at Union Station will be open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., through the end of the year.

Eliza Fawcett can be reached at elfawcett@courant.com.

Home

from Page 1

to working together to do even more to protect the rights of persons with disabilities.”

Wolcott’s mayor and the city’s attorney could not be reached to discuss the settlement, which the Department of Justice announced Monday.

SELF and the owner of the group home began pressing Wolcott for a special use permit to turn 159 Old Bound Line Road into what is described in the suit as a “home for older adults with mental disabilities” in 2015. There was organized local opposition from the outset, with neighbors demanding to know the nature of the mental illnesses or disabilities of the prospective residents — even though the home had originally been built, zoned and operated as a group home for adolescent girls with metal illnesses or disabilities for at least two decades.

In May 2016, with the SELF application pending and likely to win approval under then-existing zoning laws, Wolcott amended the laws to block the conversion to senior housing by prohibiting group homes for adults with disabilities. Local opposition to the

senior housing proposal continued during and after the zone change and the SELF application ultimately was denied.

The case in Cromwell involved strong, local opposition, but went to a jury, which concluded the town’s opposition to a group home for men with mental disabilities violated the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Fair Housing Act. Cromwell opposed the home near the town school complex, even though it had permitted a similar group home to operate in a nonresidential neighborhood for years. The operators of the proposed Cromwell home ultimately withdrew their application in the face of local opposition and the jury awarded the \$5 million to punish the town for years of opposition.

In Danbury, the local zoning board has rejected an application by a Stamford nonprofit to permanently convert an 86-room motel to an emergency shelter. The motel has been operating temporarily as a shelter for much of the pandemic. The state used about \$4.5 million in federal pandemic relief money to purchase the motel last spring with plans in the works to use it as a permanent emergency shelter. Neighbors oppose the plan.

Omicron

from Page 1

“Out of an abundance of caution, we are delaying the return of senior leaders to the office as scientists and medical experts work to understand the new virus variant, Omicron, and its implications for transmissibility and vaccine effectiveness,” Matthew Sturdevant, a spokesperson for The Hartford, said in a statement.

The omicron variant of COVID-19 arrives in Connecticut amidst a rise in the state’s COVID-19 numbers. The state on Monday reported 5,481 new COVID-19 cases; the state’s weekly positivity rate now also stands at 5.8%, the highest it has been since mid-January.

The first Connecticut person to have tested positive for omicron was a Hartford County man in his 60s. He may have been infected by a family member who attended the Anime NYC convention in New York, according to Gov. Ned Lamont’s office.

In a statement Saturday, Lamont said “I must urge everyone in Connecticut not to panic. While we are still learning more about this variant, our health providers

are continuing to do their best to protect everyone.”

Lamont recommended residents seek out vaccines and booster shots, but also offered reassurance that vaccines continue to be effective in fighting the virus.

First detected in South Africa, the omicron variant has since been found in dozens of countries, including Canada and the United States. In Connecticut, officials have warned for weeks that the variant would likely arrive soon and have pleaded with residents to get booster shots as a precaution.

Though researchers lack full understanding of the omicron variant’s properties, evidence points to increased transmissibility and an enhanced risk of reinfection for those who have already had COVID-19. It is so far unclear the degree to which the new variant can break through vaccine immunity.

The World Health Organization, which has classified omicron as a “variant of concern,” suggests safety measures including vaccination, masks, hand hygiene, physical distancing, improved ventilation of indoor spaces and avoidance of crowded spaces.

Alex Putterman contributed to this report.

McGee

from Page 1

should be able to go to college and not be in debt for the rest of their lives. You know, those things I foundationally believe.”

McGee said anti-abortion Democrats are hardly rare among voters, but she acknowledged they generally keep a low profile among officeholders in Connecticut. And McGee, who once was convinced she would be an actress, doesn’t do low key.

“I knew that I would be kind of like a unicorn, and knew that I would be different, that my perspectives would be different, that I would oftentimes challenge my own party. And then I thought, ‘That’s OK.’ I would rather be honest,” she said. “I would rather walk away from something having been honest, and maybe disliked, than to have been liked by everyone and dishonest.”

Voters in the 116th House District, one of three in this city, go to the polls for a special election on Dec. 14 to elect a successor to former Rep. Michael DiMassa, D-West Haven, who is facing criminal charges related to his alleged misuse of federal relief funds in his job as a city employee.

McGee’s advocacy on abortion

is not an issue raised by either of her opponents, Republican Richard DePalma and Portia A. Bias, a former Democratic council member who petitioned for a spot on the ballot as an Independent. Both said they were unaware of it.

DePalma says he is opposed to abortion except in cases of rape. “I can’t see how anybody can go and get pregnant by accident tonight,” DePalma said. “I mean, you can get condoms in every grocery store. Anywhere you are, you really got birth control and stuff like that.”

Bias, who says she lost her council seat when Democrats endorsed McGee over her in 2019, said she believed in choice in all things. “I believe in freedom of choice,” Bias said. Asked if that extended to abortion, she said, “We’ve been given choices in life and if that’s one of the choices we’ve been given, who is to make judgment on someone else’s choice?”

If not an issue in West Haven, McGee’s position is a matter of conversation in Hartford.

House Speaker Matt Ritter, D-Hartford, who has fielded concerned calls about McGee from advocates of abortion rights, said he had two blunt conversations with her about where she would stand in the House Democratic caucus regarding a 30-year-

old state law that codifies the framework of Roe v. Wade, which established a right to abortion.

“I told her, surely, there will never be a bill called as long as I’m speaker that ever whittles away or attacks a woman’s right to choose,” Ritter said. “She understands that. There was no debate about that. She was very comfortable. I don’t anticipate her introducing legislation to overturn it.”

Rep. Jillian Gilcrest, D-West Hartford, did. She said abortion is, or should be, a litmus test, one that Democratic town committees should enforce.

“Of course people have personal beliefs, but when it comes to policy, the Democrats should be pro-choice, and we should support pro-choice policies,” she said. “I also think this is illustrative of [how] we need to do a better job with our DTCs, that they screen candidates and also ask important questions before nominating candidates to the House.”

McGee, who is Black, is supported by members of the legislature’s Black and Puerto Rican Caucus, including those are who ardent defenders of abortion rights.

“The challenge for a person like her is to get people to stop for a second and say, ‘Maybe I should listen to who they really are,’ ”

said Sen. Gary Winfield, D-New Haven, one of the caucus members backing her candidacy.

“I think as a Black woman I’m always happy to see one more, as long as it’s not a Republican who sort of works against everything that I do,” said Sen. Marilyn Moore, D-Bridgeport, a former employee of Planned Parenthood. Of McGee, she said, “I would expect her principles are aligned with Democrats. This is one issue.”

Race recently has been a sensitive issue in reproductive-rights circles, with complaints, as reported by BuzzFeed News last year, that NARAL was “by and for cis white women.”

Liz Gustafson, the state director of NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut, was circumspect when asked about McGee.

“This conversation is about more than just one single candidate or legislator in one single moment of time here in Connecticut,” Gustafson said. “This is a conversation about the reality we have been and are currently facing, which is that abortion access has been systemically under attack in this country for decades and has been undermined by barriers, political interference and stigma for decades.”

McGee said she never has attended a demonstration or vigil

outside a Connecticut abortion clinic, actions that some clinic patients and employees see as harassment. But she witnessed one in California, where she was attending a workshop.

“I prayed. And I prayed for the abortionist, and I prayed for the women getting abortions, because I hope that one day it’s unnecessary, it doesn’t have to be a choice, because there’s more for women,” McGee said. “But in my heart of compassion, I don’t want to spew hate, because that works against the work that I want to do. And so I prayed.”

While some of the conservative religious groups affiliated with the anti-abortion movement are opposed to gay rights, McGee said she is not. Winfield said there have been whispers to that effect, but he noted at a recent campaign event that Erick Russell, a married LGBT activist and vice chair of the state Democratic Party, was in the audience applauding McGee.

McGee is a defender of pregnancy crisis centers that offer counseling and support to pregnant women thinking of abortion, which also puts her at odds with the Senate and House Democratic caucuses. In Connecticut, she said, the fight over abortion is about providing options to abortion and not attempting bans.

CONNECTICUT

Lamont mum on comptroller replacement

Lembo's early departure due to health reasons leaves governor an interesting political choice

By Keith M. Phaneuf
CT Mirror

With state Comptroller Kevin P. Lembo's decision to resign for medical reasons later this month, Gov. Ned Lamont faces a provocative question — should he settle on the safe choice or make it a political pick?

The Democratic governor could appoint a caretaker, a veteran of state government who will complete the final year of Lembo's term, but who would not run in 2022 for another four years in office.

Or Lamont could appoint a political ally — someone who has ambitions to run next year — and give that appointee a huge advantage over any other contenders for the Democratic nomination.

The governor's office was mum about the options Friday, when Lembo announced that a serious cardiac condition would force him

to leave the fiscal watchdog post he's held for the past 11 years. The governor only said he would reach a decision soon, since Lembo will leave the job on Dec. 31.

But several veterans of state government and party politics said that while the choice is Lamont's, the caretaker option comes with fewer complications.

"My guess is that the race for comptroller next year will be contested, regardless of whether the person [Lamont appoints] is thought to be a caretaker," said George Jepsen, whose political career included stints as Democratic state chairman, Connecticut attorney general and Senate majority leader. "These statewide constitutional office vacancies don't occur very often, and Connecticut is brimming with talented officeholders who are naturally going to want to move up."

State Rep. Sean Scanlon, D-Guilford, who co-chairs the legisla-



Lembo

ture's Finance Committee, has been openly exploring a possible bid for comptroller in the event Lembo — also a Democrat — chose not to run again.

And while a Democratic field for comptroller hasn't filled out yet, a glance at another race proves Jepsen's point.

Longtime Secretary of the State Denise Merrill, a Hartford Democrat, declared in June she wouldn't seek another term. Three Democrats and two Republicans are exploring bids for that office and a fourth Democrat, Rep. Stephanie Thomas of Norwalk, declared her candidacy last week.

State legislators are prohibited, by law, from accepting an appointment to fill the remaining term of a constitutional office such as the comptroller's. But more legislators besides Scanlon are expected to jockey for Lembo's job, and Lamont would ruffle more than a

few feathers if he tapped a political outsider to be anything more than a placeholder.

But while it's unclear what Lamont might do, this governor prides himself on reaching outside government circles to find innovative solutions to political challenges.

Lamont has relied heavily on appointees from the private sector to help him guide health, business and education policy throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

The governor also surprised many when he sought — and received — legislative approval to launch a public-private education partnership with hedge fund billionaire Ray Dalio's charitable trust.

And while that controversial partnership — which Lamont and lawmakers exempted from state ethics and disclosure rules — fizzled after one year, the governor vowed even as it dissolved in May 2020 that he would continue to look outside of traditional political circles.

"I was one of the first non-poli-

ticians, more of a business guy, in a long time here," Lamont said at that time. "And I really wanted to get the private sector — big business, small business, academics, not-for-profits — more invested in their state. ... We have amazing state employees but we can't be experts on everything."

But some political insiders say that in 2022, more than at any other time, the comptroller's office will need people who are experts at fiscal policy and state politics.

The comptroller's many duties include oversight of state retirement benefits, and Lembo's office is projecting a huge surge in retirements next year, with roughly 12,500 state employees eligible to step down. And while no one is projecting that many will actually leave service, the eligible pool is almost six times the average retirement rate of the past five years.

The state also is just beginning to roll out a new Paid Family Medical Leave program for the private sector, and the comptroller's office will play a huge oversight role in that endeavor.



Jennifer Bareilles, from left, Gerardo Rodriguez and Evan Zes perform in "It's a Wonderful Life" at Hartford Stage. T CHARLES ERICKSON/COURTESY PHOTOS

REVIEW

'Wonderful' takes the Stage

What 'It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play' may lack in spectacle, it makes up for in heart

By Christopher Arnott
Hartford Courant

It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play" at Hartford Stage works its Christmas magic without excessive spectacle. It's a story, told and acted before your eyes by actors playing actors. It's easy and fun to follow, and makes you feel good about living in the world.

A five-person cast takes on all the roles in this well-known story of a man who is given a chance to reevaluate his life just as he is intent on leaving it. The special effects are a guy at a table in the corner: professional foley artist Leer Leary, dipping bathroom plungers into a washbucket for a lake-rescue scene and ringing the bells to signify angels getting their wings.

The tale is told in the form of a 1940s radio broadcast, with actors at mic stands. There's a chumminess among them, an old-school cordiality that is also found in the story of a small town where life is hard but friends are everywhere.

You'd call this "It's a Wonderful Life" nostalgic if it wasn't so conscious of present-day theater concerns like diversity, sensitivity and the avoidance of old ageist and sexist stereotypes.

Joe Landry's adaptation, which has become a holiday standard at theaters throughout the country, is based on the beloved Frank Capra film but also on the Philip Van Doren Stern short story on which it's based. The play's structure is notably different than the film's, even if you don't count in the whole "live radio play" conceit.

Even with the radio trappings — including funny fake ads — "It's a Wonderful Life" is much shorter than the movie version, which is one definition of a good family-friendly show. Kids are unlikely to get bored, though some will undoubtedly miss the flashiness, flying ghosts and other marvels

of the show that Hartford Stage usually stages at this time of year, "A Christmas Carol — A Ghost Story of Christmas."

The theater made the decision earlier a few months ago not to do "A Christmas Carol" this year due to COVID concerns regarding its large cast, which includes numerous children, and the crowded backstage crew needed for the aerial stunts and other effects.

Hartford Stage openly acknowledges the lack of "A Christmas Carol" by placing its Scrooge, Michael Preston, front and center in "It's a Wonderful Life." Preston does not play the beleaguered George Bailey role immortalized by Jimmy Stewart in the movie. Preston's the head of the radio troupe performing the drama. He's the emcee as well as many supporting characters, including the rather Scrooge-like banker Mr. Potter. (Unlike Scrooge, Potter remains unredeemed, and is as surly at the end of the story as he is at its beginning, decades earlier.)

The cast actively avoids aping the movie. The affable, bald-headed, brash Gerardo Rodriguez is emphatically not a lanky, loping Jimmy Stewart type. Rodriguez plays George Bailey as a go-getter who's encountered one bad surprise too many. Shirine Babb is a strong-willed Mary Hatch, and her courtship with George is treated as a bonding of equals.

The other two members of the cast, Jennifer Bareilles and Evan Zes are perhaps its most important, portraying a flurry of supporting roles (including Clarence the Angel for Zes and Bailey's daughter Tuzuz for Bareilles). They also bring charm and charisma to all their parts keeping the overall tone of the show light and funny. They add comic expressions, cute gestures and sight gags that elevate this rather talky mic-bound enterprise. Both are endlessly enjoyable to watch, creative and versatile and



Onstage sound man Leer Leary brings the noise in "It's a Wonderful Life."

IF YOU GO: "It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play" by Joe Landry, co-directed by Rachel Alderman and Melia Bensussen, runs Nov. 26 through Dec. 26 at Hartford Stage, 50 Church St., Hartford. \$30-\$100. Find more information at hartfordstage.org.

just plain amusing, from Bareilles' taxi-driver snarl to Zes' snappy bowler hat.

"It's a Wonderful Life" is only the second show of the first full Hartford Stage season under its new artistic director Melia Bensussen, but there are already clear signs of a new style at the theater.

Bensussen directed the first show of the season, Eugene O'Neill's "Ah, Wilderness!" and she is co-directing this one with Rachel Alderman (who has helmed the last several seasons of "A Christmas Carol"). In both cases, the theater's thrust stage extends right out to the audience, a distinct change from the previous artistic director, Darko Tresnjak, where many shows were framed by platforms or imposing sets that suggested a distance between the audience and the players. Here, the "Wonderful Life" actors dash about a wide open space. The audience is part of the process, clapping

when "Applause" signs are lit.

The crowd really enjoys being part of the action, rooting for the radio actors — fictional characters who play other fictional characters — as if they were real-life celebrities. Hartford Stage has also set the radio station in Hartford, which allows for some canny local references. The biggest audience cheer of recognition goes to the long-defunct G. Fox department store.

Bensussen is also a big believer in community outreach, and in a city's theater reflecting the community it serves. That was true of "Ah, Wilderness!" and it is abundantly true of "It's a Wonderful Life," in which a town bands together to help those in need.

There are real tear-jerking moments in "It's a Wonderful Life," brought on by acts of charity, love and forgiveness. There are genuine heart-wrenching scenes of suspense, sadness and despair. The lack of spectacle makes these moments all the more human and emotionally charged. The humor is just as genuine: actors clowning around for a "live studio audience."

Scrooge and the ghosts get a year off. This is a wonderful interlude.

Christopher Arnott can be reached at carnott@courant.com.

At Max, a way to help those in need

Add a gift to your check, and restaurant group will match it

By Susan Dunne
Hartford Courant

The Max Restaurant Group is collecting money through Dec. 31 for its annual "Roasts for the Holidays" drive to provide "Max-quality" food to local soup kitchens and emergency shelters, the restaurant group announced.

Diners and takeout customers at seven Max locations in Connecticut and two in Massachusetts can add a tax-deductible contribution to their check to donate to the initiative.

Max Cares Foundation will match all gifts up to \$25,000.

"Everyone wants to celebrate the holidays in some way with family and friends, but not everyone has the ability to do that," says Tom Porell, operations manager at the House of Bread, one of this year's beneficiaries.

Richard Rosenthal, president of Max Cares Foundation, said last year's Roasts for the Holidays was the most successful in the initiative's five-year history. "We plan to top that this year," Rosenthal said.

Participating restaurants are Max Downtown and Trumbull Kitchen in Hartford; Max's Oyster Bar, Max Burger and Savoy Pizzeria in West Hartford; Max-A-Mia in Avon; Max Fish in Glastonbury; Max's Tavern in Springfield, Massachusetts; and Max Burger in Longmeadow, Massachusetts.

Other charitable organizations who want to benefit from the funding can email info@maxcaresfoundation.org.

To donate to the program, or for more details, visit maxcaresfoundation.org

Susan Dunne can be reached at sdunne@courant.com.

HARTFORD
Police: Man shot multiple times in Asylum Hill

A man is in critical condition after being shot more than once in Hartford's Asylum Hill neighborhood Sunday afternoon, police said.

Officers learned about the shooting in the area of 97 Ashley St. from a ShotSpotter alert shortly before 1:40 p.m., police said. When they arrived, they found a man in his 50s suffering from multiple gunshot wounds.

He was taken to the hospital, where he was listed in critical condition, police said. They said Monday that his condition had stabilized.

The department's Crime Scene and Major Crimes Divisions are investigating the shooting. Anyone with information about it is asked to call the Hartford police tip line at 860-722-8477 (TIPS).

— Christine Dempsey

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF Theodore Krzynowek, AKA Tadeusz Krynovek (20-00494)

The Hon. Michael A. Carrier, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Berlin Probate Court, by decree dated November 30, 2021, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Susan I. Meagher, Chief Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Pawel Krzykowski
c/o THOMAS P. TABELLIONE, THOMAS P. TABELLIONE, 35 PEARL STREET, NEW BRITAIN, CT 06051

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF Harry R. Carling (21-00845)

The Hon. Michael A. Carrier, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Berlin Probate Court, by decree dated November 29, 2021, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Susan I. Meagher, Chief Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Kevin L. Carling
Todd A. Carling
c/o RICHARD H. PENTORE, RICHARD H. PENTORE, 785 FARMINGTON AVE., KENSINGTON, CT 06037
12/7/21 7099277

Extra Space Storage will hold a public auction to sell personal property described below belonging to those individuals listed below at the location indicated:
132 Silas Deane Hwy
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860-916-0534
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520 Samuel Alexis Coreano House goods
67 Ebony Johnson House goods
The auction will be listed and advertised on www.storageasures.com. Purchases must be made with cash only and paid at the above referenced facility in order to complete the transaction. Extra Space Storage may refuse any bid and may rescind any purchase up until the winning bidder takes possession of the personal property.
11/30, 12/07/21 7083814

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF Santos Santana, Jr. (21-00830)

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Susan I. Meagher, Chief Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Oyeyemi Santana
c/o JOHN ADEAYO SODIPO, LAW OFFICES OF, JACOBS & SODIPO LLC, 120 OXFORD STREET, HARTFORD, CT 06105
12/7/21 7097852

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF Dorothy Eunice Decoy (21-00852)

The Hon. Michael A. Carrier, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Berlin Probate Court, by decree dated December 1st, 2021, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Susan I. Meagher, Chief Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Amy L. Soobitsky, 663 Killingworth Road, Higganum, CT 06441
12/7/21 7097831

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF CHARLES STEFFENS, JR. (21-0358)

The Hon. Sean Michael Peoples, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Glastonbury - Hebron Probate Court, by decree dated November 30, 2021, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Alex M. LaValley, Assistant Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Richard Steffens
c/o THOMAS BABSON KANE, KANE, HARTLEY & KANE, PC, 972 NEW LONDON TPKE, PO BOX 337, GLASTONBURY, CT 06033

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF Maria Theresa Santos (21-00795)

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Susan I. Meagher, Chief Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Juan R. Rodriguez, 1846 Corbin Avenue, New Britain, CT 06053
12/7/21 7097825

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF STANLEY A. SPENCER, Late of East Hampton, AKA STANLEY SPENCER (21-00340)

The Hon. Jennifer L. Berkenstock, Judge of the Court of Probate, Region #14 Probate Court, by decree dated December 1, 2021, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Suzanne B. Emond, Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Sheryl Doolittle, 223 Cherry Hill Road, Middlefield, CT 06455
12/7/21 7097741

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF ANN C. MILLS, late of Portland, AKA Ann Mills (21-00337)

The Hon. Jennifer L. Berkenstock, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Region # 14 Probate Court, by decree dated November 30, 2021, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Monika L. Graham, Assistant Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Michael D. Schmidt
c/o SHARON P. LETTICK, LETTICK & LETTICK PC, 2494 WHITNEY AVE, P.O. BOX 5616, HAMDEN, CT 06518


NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF CARL V. GUSTAFSON, Late of East Hampton (21-00302)

The Hon. Jennifer L. Berkenstock, Judge of the Court of Probate, District of Region # 14 Probate Court, by decree dated December 2, 2021, ordered that all claims must be presented to the fiduciary at the address below. Failure to promptly present any such claim may result in the loss of rights to recover on such claim.

Suzanne B. Emond, Clerk

The fiduciary is:
Kellie Gosselin
c/o WILLIAM D. GRADY, WILLIAM D. GRADY, ATTORNEY AT LAW, 8 WEST HIGH STREET, PO BOX 179, EAST HAMPTON, CT 06424



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Afghan refugee's tale told in vivid animation

With hybrid format, 'Flee' among year's most acclaimed films

By Jake Coyle
Associated Press

Jonas Poher Rasmussen was 15 when a boy his same age arrived alone in his small Danish town.

"He arrived all by himself and stayed with a family just around the corner from where I lived," says Rasmussen. "We met at the bus stop every morning going to high school, and we became very good friends. Even then I was curious how he and why he had gotten to the village, but he didn't want to talk about it."

It would be a long time before Rasmussen's friend was prepared to tell his story to him, or anyone else. About 15 years ago, Rasmussen, who by then was in radio, asked about making an audio documentary of his story. He wasn't ready. But eight years ago, when Rasmussen was in a program that paired documentary filmmakers with animators, he asked again. This time, his friend was finally ready to talk about his family fleeing war-torn Kabul, Afghanistan, in the 1980s.

"What you see in the film, what you hear in the film, is the first time he's shared the story," says Rasmussen. "It's really difficult for him to talk about."

"Flee," which recently opened in select theaters and expands in coming weeks, uses animation to vividly capture Rasmussen's friend's story. Speaking anonymously under the name Amin, he relates to Rasmussen a five-year odyssey that stretches from Afghanistan to the Soviet Union to Scandinavia. It's



The film "Flee" is an animated documentary that traces the journey of one man's family fleeing war-torn Kabul, Afghanistan, in the 1980s. **NEON**

a documentary that gives vivid shape to Amin's life and to the harrowing plight of migrants. And it's a film about sharing a secret — a past that Amin doesn't want to be defined by (in present day, he's a successful academic in a loving relationship with his fiancé Jasper) but that he feels reluctantly compelled to share. It's a testimony.

In pairing a painful true tale with colorful animation, "Flee" follows in the recent tradition of films like Israeli filmmaker Ari Folman's "Waltz With Bashir" and "Tower," about a 1966 campus shooting, to intimately render a kind of story usually only filtered

through blunter mediums like journalism and traditional documentary. And it has made "Flee" one of the most acclaimed films of the year. After first premiering at the Sundance Film Festival, where it won best documentary, "Flee" has picked up honors from the Gotham Awards, the New York Film Critics Circle and the National Board of Review. It's Denmark's submission to the Academy Awards, where it will potentially vie for best animated film, best documentary and best international film.

Rasmussen originally set out to make a 20-minute short. But what began hesi-

tantly as a small project of therapy has grown into a global arthouse sensation.

"I'm certain Amin didn't expect to share it with this many people," Rasmussen said smiling. "I didn't either."

Rasmussen, 40, was learning the movie's hybrid craft as he went, with animation director Kenneth Ladekjaer. The animation includes scenes of him and Amin talking. It's filled with moments where Amin, often lying down with his eyes closed, slows to summon the courage to psychologically retrace his steps. While the animation can be dazzlingly evocative, to

Rasmussen, it's most significant in how it helps you listen, without distraction, to Amin's experience.

"We're exposed to so many stories in the news and in our feeds of people struggling. You have to block things out because if you didn't, you'd lay in bed all day. But because you have the animation in between, it kind of frees you up to listen to what's actually being said and you take it in more," says Rasmussen. "There's something about hearing a real voice, a real human voice, with animation on top. Maybe it also has to do with animation being something you're used to

as a child."

"Flee" also took on larger significance. When a wave of migrants from Syria and other countries came to Europe in 2015, a crisis seized Europe. Denmark sometimes took a hard line with refugees and tightened immigration policies. Earlier this year, it became the first European country to revoke asylum status for some Syrian refugees, telling them Syria was safe enough to return to now.

"I started out wanting to do a story about my friend," says Rasmussen. "Then the refugee crisis hit in Denmark and Europe in 2015. I felt the need to give refugees a human face."

Still, that face — Amin — remains only a general cartoon. Amin is happy to preserve his anonymity, Rasmussen says, even while he's gratified by the film and how it has resonated for others. Amin, the director says, can this way go about his life and have control over when he talks about his past.

But "Flee" has wide echoes beyond the individual story it tells. For Rasmussen, it taps into a profound and universal human experience, including that of his own ancestors. His grandmother's family, Russian-Jewish refugees, took much of the same route taken by Amin's family.

"They fled from Russia through the Baltic Sea to Denmark, where she was born in a hotel. Then they applied for asylum, but they got rejected. They moved on to Germany. My grandmother grew up in Berlin. In school, she had to stand up with a yellow star on her chest, and then she had to flee again," says Rasmussen. "This is something that can happen to anyone, anywhere around the world."

CELEBRITIES

Justin Bieber performs at Saudi race

From news services

Pop star Justin Bieber performed to a packed crowd in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia, singing some of his most popular hits. The Sunday night concert took place even as human rights campaigners and activists called on Bieber to cancel his performance to protest the kingdom's arrests and crackdown of critics.

Bieber's model wife, Hailey Baldwin Bieber, posted a video on Instagram of him on stage, with the words: "Go Baby." Other videos on social media showed Bieber on stage solo, wearing a coordinated red outfit. Pop and R&B singer Jason Derulo performed before Bieber with backup female dancers in sweatpants and baggy tops.

Only a few years ago, this would have been an unthinkable scene in Saudi Arabia, where ultraconservative norms prevailed. Concerts were banned, and unmarried men and women were segregated in public spaces. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is behind the sweeping changes.

Human Rights Watch and others, however, have called on celebrities to boycott the kingdom, saying such events are aimed at diverting attention and deflecting scrutiny from Saudi Arabia's human rights record.

Bieber, who has not commented on the public pressure surrounding his performance, took the stage as part of Saudi Arabia's Grand Prix, a Formula One season race.

Kennedy Center Honors resume: The Kennedy Center Honors returned to tradition this year with a real-life gala Sunday and the presence of the president for the first time since 2016.

The lifetime achievement awards for artis-



Justin Bieber performs Sunday at a concert after a Formula One race in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia. **AMR NABIL/AP**

tic excellence were presented to Motown Records creator Berry Gordy, "Saturday Night Live" mastermind Lorne Michaels, actor-singer Bette Midler, opera singer Justino Diaz and folk music legend Joni Mitchell. The tributes to them featured testimonials and performances.

President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden also attended the event. President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump skipped the show the first three years he was in office after several of the artists honored in 2017 threatened to boycott a White House reception if he participated. Last year, the pandemic forced a delay and major changes to the program.

The ceremony will be broadcast Dec. 22 by CBS.

Holland to play Astaire: Actor Tom Holland said Sunday that he plans to play Fred Astaire in an upcoming biopic.

"Oh, I am playing Fred Astaire," the "Spider-Man" star said at an event in London. "Yeah, I am."

Producer Amy Pascal recently said she wanted Holland to play Astaire,

but Holland had yet to comment on the possibility until now. While his dance background hasn't been highlighted in his superhero films, Holland, 25, played the title role in "Billy Elliott: The Musical" from 2008 to 2010.

Singer Jackson dies: Country musician Stonewall Jackson, 89, who sang on the Grand Ole Opry for more than 50 years and had No. 1 hits with "Waterloo" and others, died Saturday after a long battle with vascular dementia. The Opry announced Jackson's death in a news release.

The guitarist performed on the Opry beginning in 1956 and was still appearing in 2010. Over his career, Jackson landed 44 singles on the Billboard country chart.

Dec. 7 birthdays: Bluegrass singer Bobby Osborne is 90. Actor Ellen Burstyn is 89. Singer Tom Waits is 72. Actor Priscilla Barnes is 67. Actor Jeffrey Wright is 56. Actor C. Thomas Howell is 55. Actor Kimberly Hebert Gregory is 49. Actor Shiri Appleby is 43. Singer Sara Bareilles is 42. Actor Jack Huston is 39. Singer Aaron Carter is 34.



ASK AMY

By Amy Dickinson
askamy@amydickinson.com Twitter@askingamy

Homeowner's racial call-out offends family

Dear Amy: Am I racist?

A couple of teenagers were at my front door, and I shouted to my husband: "Hey, there are some Black kids at the door, and I don't have time to deal with them."

Kids at the door in my neighborhood are usually selling something or are looking for yard work.

My biracial future daughter-in-law was present when I did this and took offense. Apparently, she and my stepson discussed how "un-woke" I am. As soon as I learned she had been offended, I sent a note of apology.

I am in my 60s and was raised in the South.

My grandfather referred to all Black people using the N word.

However, I was active in civil rights during my youth. I was the first white student at my high school who insisted to be put on bathroom cleaning duty just like the students of color had to. (The white students got to work in the office.)

As a reporter for a newspaper in the South, I had a gun pulled on me as I was covering a boycott of white businesses.

But these kids have never bothered to ask. I meant no harm referring to these teens as "Black kids."

I don't enjoy receiving a lecture on being "woke" from two Midwesterners, one of whom has traveled the world working with the disadvantaged.

I know their hearts are in the right place, but what about giving someone the benefit of a doubt, before inferring they are racist?

— *Woke Enough*

Dear Enough: Do you

identify white people who come to your front door using their race as the primary descriptive? I assume not. So yes, you doing so only with Black people is a racist way to communicate.

You seem to believe that because you aren't as racist as you were raised to be (and have demonstrated some admirable moments of not being racist), this means that you have conquered racism.

This is an extremely flimsy defense.

You also believe that this young couple should not throw down the race card because you have faced a variety of racial issues over time.

But if all your previous experiences didn't teach you that all human beings need to continue to learn, grow and change, then what was the point of having these experiences?

If you have apologized without understanding what you are apologizing for, then your apology doesn't mean much.

The word "woke" is applied in many different contexts, but I take being woke as the ultimate goal of the lifelong process of awakening to the human experience, as it is lived by others. So, wake up!

Dear Amy: Is it me, or is there only one way to interpret the response I quote below from my boyfriend of four years?

While I don't think any background is needed, I will say that I heard from him at 7:30 p.m., and then heard nothing until 3:30 p.m. the following day.

Here is what my boyfriend texted: "Love you, but I'm not going to

do the 'it's been this many hours and you haven't messaged me so you must not love me' thing.

Your bucket of trust has to be able to hold the water I've given you to make it through 24 hours."

— *A Leaky Bucket*

Dear Leaky: There are many reasons for couples to be in touch — other than having to replenish a partner's leaky "bucket of trust." I would say that a brief "good night" text or call to someone you love is within the norm.

And while I appreciate the concept of a "bucket of trust," your boyfriend is implying that yours is empty. Either you don't trust him as much as you would like to, or you simply desire more frequent affectionate contact.

Your boyfriend is telling you that he's not willing to do that.

Dear Amy: "Wish I didn't Know" was privy to information concerning their husband's DNA parentage, because of a shared account on a DNA website.

Thank you for counseling this spouse to let the husband come to this information on his own timetable. I dealt with a remarkably similar issue in my own family. I'm glad I didn't interfere.

— *Been There*

Dear Been There: People who receive test kits as gifts this year should prepare themselves for a surprise.

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Tami Roman finishes what she started

Reality star back at beach house for overdue conversations in ‘Real World Homecoming’

By Meredith Blake
Los Angeles Times

Tami Roman swore she was done with reality TV. In 1993, the 22-year-old aspiring singer was cast in the second season of “The Real World” and was central to its most memorable moments — including an abortion documented by MTV cameras and a physical altercation with her roommate, David Edwards, that led to his departure from the series.

Seventeen years later, as a divorced mom with two children to support, she returned to the medium in VH1’s “Basketball Wives” and later its spinoff, “Basketball Wives LA,” where she spent nearly a decade expertly stoking the drama. Finally, in 2019, she kissed the genre goodbye — for good, so she thought — to focus on acting in projects like the Apple TV+ series “Truth Be Told,” the Lee Daniels-produced sitcom “The Ms. Pat Show” and her popular web series, “The Bonnet Chronicles.”

So when Paramount+ asked her to be a part of “The Real World Homecoming: Los Angeles,” she said no. Over and over again. “I am not coming back. I am off reality TV, and I ... sure don’t want to do that with those people I ain’t talked to in 30 years,” she recalled. Then Roman’s producing partner, Jill Ramsey, put it another way: “She said, ‘Tami, this is where you started. Just go finish what you started.’ That’s when it clicked.”

In August, Roman and her roommates returned to the same Venice Beach

house they shared for six turbulent months during Bill Clinton’s first term in the White House. There were long-overdue conversations about race, body image and the blanket-dragging incident that resulted in the “Real World’s” first ejection — all documented in “The Real World Homecoming: Los Angeles,” now streaming on Paramount+.

Roman says the experience was productive — to a point. “I really learned that no matter where you are in life, you have to meet people where they are, and not everybody is upwardly mobile. Some people are still exactly where you left them.”

Roman — then known as Tami Akbar — was working at an HIV health care center in West Hollywood and performing with an En Vogue-esque R&B girl group when a co-worker told her she had auditioned for “The Real World.” Roman had never heard of the show but stumbled on a marathon that weekend on MTV. “People are on TV, just, like, living their lives? I didn’t even know that was a thing. And so I said, ‘Well, I could do that.’”

Using a bulky camcorder, she filmed an audition tape and delivered it, in person, to the “Real World’s” production office, where she was told the season had already been fully cast. “I said, ‘Well, I’m not leaving until you look at my tape.’” The strong-arming worked. A few days later, producers Mary-Ellis Bunim and Jonathan Murray called to tell her she made the cut.

“She had charisma from



Tami Roman rejoins her housemates in “The Real World Homecoming: Los Angeles.” KENNETH CAPELLO/MTV ENTERTAINMENT

the first time I met her. She had this amazing ability to be vulnerable and be completely honest about who she is. There was a confidence there that made her incredibly attractive,” said Murray, who was also compelled by her biography. Roman was raised by a single mom and had been homeless for a time, a fact that seemed to fuel her ambition.

The cast that season was notable for its discordant array of strong-willed personalities, including Jon Brennan, a conservative Christian country singer from Kentucky, and Dominic Griffin, a spiky-haired Irish writer who drove cross-country in an RV with Roman.

Feisty and funny, Roman proved she was a born reality TV star before that was even a thing. In a landmark moment for television, “The Real World” documented Roman’s decision to have an abortion. MTV cameras followed her to and from the clinic where she had her procedure and captured the mostly

thoughtful conversations she had with her housemates, who held divergent views on abortion rights.

“I wasn’t necessarily trying to be the spokesperson for Roe v. Wade,” Roman says, “but I really wanted to show the emotional roller coaster that a person is on if they decide to make this decision.” Roman anticipated backlash but instead received fan mail from grateful viewers — “women who had gone through the experience and felt like no one would understand,” she says.

In another memorable moment from the season, Edwards tried to pull a blanket off of Roman, who was lying in bed wearing only her underwear. What seemed to be a bit of puerile late-night fun quickly went awry as Edwards dragged an increasing upset Roman, clinging to the blanket and screaming for him to stop, down the hall.

The three female cast members, including Roman, concluded they didn’t feel safe with

Edwards in the house and, in a “Real World” first, he was kicked out. The situation was deeply fraught: Some viewers believed Edwards, a Black man, was unfairly tarnished with an ugly stereotype and bristled when housemate Beth Stolarczyk, a white woman, compared his behavior to that of a rapist. Still others thought Edwards had clearly crossed a line, even if the altercation had begun playfully.

The controversial decision is addressed in the first episode of “Homecoming,” and three decades later, it’s clear the feelings remain raw — particularly for Edwards, who says his comedy career suffered as a result.

Roman is firm in her belief that when a woman says no, “it needs to be honored.” But she regrets the aftermath Edwards experienced and lays some of the blame on herself for not disclosing certain traumas in her past that contributed to her emotional reaction. “A lot of the story was missing,

primarily because I wasn’t as open and as transparent as I should have been,” she says. What Roman didn’t share at the time was that she was a sexual abuse survivor. She also struggled intensely with negative body image.

“Body dysmorphia is something I was diagnosed with later on in life. I didn’t know that I had a disorder. What I knew was that I abused laxatives, I starved myself, I was throwing up food,” she says. Having much of her body exposed on camera was “the last thing I ever wanted to happen,” she explains. “David didn’t stop because he didn’t know what Tami was dealing with, in her own mind.”

Roman, whose recent weight loss has prompted concern from fans on social media, says she is still fighting the demons. “When I think I look great, everybody else thinks I look like a crackhead,” she says. “Every day is a challenge for me to get up and go, ‘I love everything about myself.’”

TV Q&A

Why did ‘Resident’ jump time?

By Rich Heldenfels
Tribune News Service

Q: It appears that after a break, “The Resident” went into a time warp. Conrad was done grieving and thinking of returning to the hospital, and the baby was suddenly a 4-year-old. What’s going on?

A: As ET Online explained it, “The decision to fast-forward several years was, from the producers’ perspective, needed following the devastating death of Conrad’s wife, Nic.” Said showrunner Peter Elkoff: “Conrad losing Nic is a terrible tragedy, and we felt like if we were going to tell a true story of grief, it would last for a really long time. ... We felt like we would play the loss and the grief ... for a couple of episodes, and then do the time jump, so we could find Conrad recovered, on the brink of, ready for whatever new version of his life there would be. It was really to avoid a prolonged grieving story because we wouldn’t want to short-change it and have him suddenly, three episodes later, without jumping time being like, ‘No, I’m fine now.’”

Q: Any comments on whether it’s likely that “Pennyworth” will continue?

A: The series about the adventures of Alfred Pennyworth before he became Bruce Wayne’s aide will be back, but in a different location. First made for Epix for two seasons, it will have a third arriving in 2022 — on HBO Max. (The streamer will begin showing the first two seasons next year.) According to HBO Max, “Season three begins after a five-year time jump: the civil war (in England) is over, and a cultural revolution has changed the world for better or worse — usher-



Matt Czuchy as Conrad and Remington Blaire Evans as Gigi in a recent episode of “The Resident.” NATHAN BOLSTER/FOX

ing in a new age of Super Heroes and Supervillains.”

Q: Will “9-1-1: Lone Star” be back soon?

A: The third season arrives on Jan. 3 in the “9-1-1” time slot while that show takes a break. According to Fox, “After the events of the second season finale, the 126 is shut down, and the crew is dispersed across the city. In the multi-episode opening storyline, a massive and unexpected arctic front hits Austin with an ice storm, causing widespread chaos.”

Q: Any idea when “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel” will return?

A: The Prime Video series will be back for a fourth season Feb. 18, with two new episodes every Friday for four weeks. Says Prime Video: “It’s 1960 and change is in the air. Looking to hone her act, Midge finds a gig with total creative freedom. But her commitment to her craft — and the places it takes her — creates a rift between her and the family and friends around her.”

Q: My wife and I have been watching old “Will & Grace” episodes and watched the season finale where both Will and Grace had kids

and partners. In newer episodes, there is no mention of kids or partners. What gives?

A: When the comedy ended its original run in 2006, the finale found Will (Eric McCormack) and Grace (Debra Messing) each with a husband and a child. But when it came back, series co-creators Max Mutchnick and David Kohan reportedly did not want to deal with Will and Grace as parents and wanted to see them struggle again in relationships. So the events from the old finale were tossed aside.

In addition, Mutchnick told Variety that the first “Will & Grace” finale “wasn’t as honest as to who the characters were.” When the series ended for a second time, Will and Grace each had a child and were sharing a home. “They are each other’s family,” Mutchnick told Variety. “This ending, to me, felt a little bit more honest than the ending we did the first time, in that they end up together.”

Do you have a question or comment about entertainment past, present and future? Write to Rich Heldenfels, P.O. Box 417, Mogadore, OH 44260, or brenfels@gmail.com. Letters may be edited.

HOROSCOPES

Tarot.com

Aries (March 21-April 19): Many messages may be coming your way today, but it might be pretty difficult to hear anything specific because of all the clamor. The universe is expending lots of energy in very fantastical parts of your chart!

Taurus (April 20-May 20): Keeping to yourself might be the best option at the moment, as people may not be understanding. Perhaps you’d prefer to focus on more serious matters, or the usual jokes and banter just aren’t in your current vocabulary. You can return to socializing tomorrow.

Gemini (May 21-June 20): Choose between having fun and getting to work today — this might be particularly difficult for you. A specific person might claim all your attention! Still, don’t forget that you have responsibilities to attend to. You can spend some time having fun, but don’t overdo it.

Cancer (June 21-July 22): You’ve got plenty of things on your to-do list. While it is important to check those off, it can sometimes be a little too easy to get distracted with more entertaining thoughts. This is going to be one of those days when you’d much rather daydream than put your nose to the grindstone.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): It’s a beautiful day to enjoy yourself, but don’t be too shocked if you feel a lingering worry tugging at your mind, as though like there’s something just outside the corner of your vision. Fortunately, this sensation likely isn’t grounded in reality. Push it to the back burner.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You’re likely deep in your emotions today, so don’t be caught off guard if you feel a little more sensitive than usual. There isn’t anything wrong with this in theory, except that someone might come along to push your buttons - which could be all too easy since they could be so exposed.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You could have plenty of things on your plate calling for your attention, but that doesn’t mean you need to keep a close eye on each of them. It’s important to display a certain amount of discernment right now, because you likely can’t deal with all the irons you have in the fire.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): The planets are homing in on your finances today, encouraging you to put your best foot forward. That doesn’t mean you’ll be able to focus. It’s no secret that daydreams are much more appealing than tending to any responsibilities — but it’s up to you whether you give in or buckle down to work.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): It’s going to be hard to speak logically today, because almost everything you think or say will probably be tinged with a heavy dose of feelings. No matter how emotional you normally are you feel on the verge of waterworks. Take today to focus on your needs.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): There might be a wrench or two thrown in the works. You may be generally better than most at keeping on top of your obligations and making sure that you’re checking off every necessary box, but even you can have things slip through the cracks on occasion.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You have lots of people asking you to come out and play! It’s always fun to link up with friends, but that doesn’t mean you can just ignore your responsibilities — especially fiscal ones. Make sure a generous urge to foot the bill doesn’t end up emptying your own account.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): It’s a terrific day for making major progress — until you might start to lose steam. What inspires you one moment could wear you out the next, so don’t push too hard. Taking your time is the best method available to you, because doing slapdash work may result in you missing something important.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Associated Press

On Dec. 7, 1787, Delaware became the first state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

In 1941, the Empire of Japan launched an air raid on the U.S. Navy base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii as

well as targets in Malaya, Hong Kong, Guam, the Philippines and Wake Island; the United States declared war against Japan the next day.

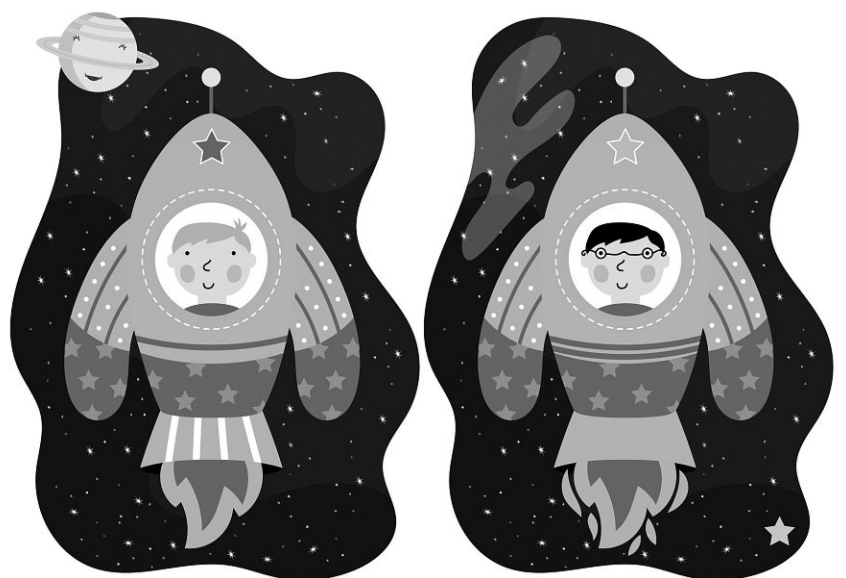
In 1972, America’s last moon mission to date was launched as Apollo 17 blasted off from Cape Canaveral.

In 2004, Hamid Karzai was sworn in as Afghan-

istan’s first popularly elected president.

In 2017, Democratic Sen. Al Franken said he would resign after a series of sexual harassment allegations.

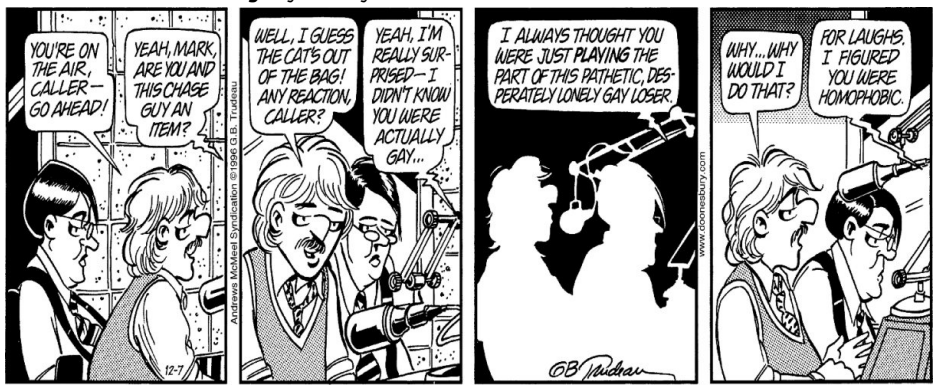
In 2018, the man who drove his car into counter-protesters at a 2017 white nationalist rally in Virginia was convicted of first-degree murder.



Peanuts By Charles M. Schulz



Classic Doonesbury By Garry Trudeau



Garfield By Jim Davis



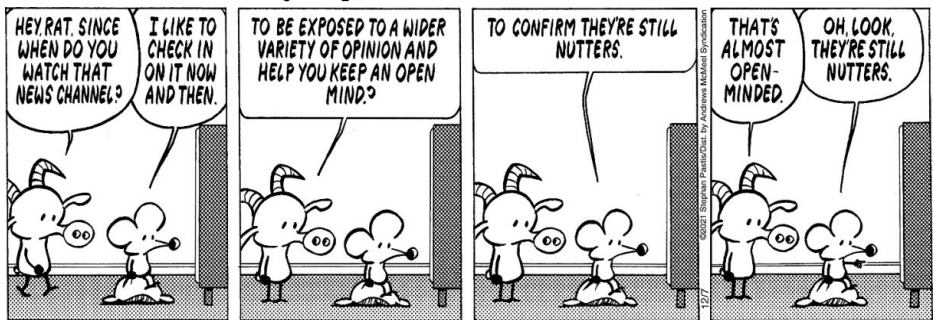
Shoe By Gary Brookins & Susie MacNelly



Dustin By Steve Kelley & Jeff Parker



Pearls Before Swine By Stephan Pastis



Mutts By Patrick McDonnell



Arctic Circle By Alex Hallatt



Jump Start By Robb Armstrong



Get Fuzzy By Darby Conley



Blondie By Dean Young and John Marshall



Dilbert By Scott Adams



Gil Thorp By Neal Rubin and Frank McLaughlin



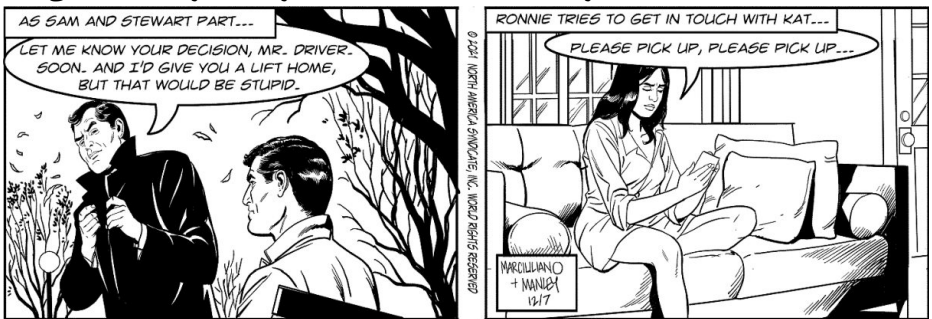
Mary Worth By Karen Moy and June Brigman



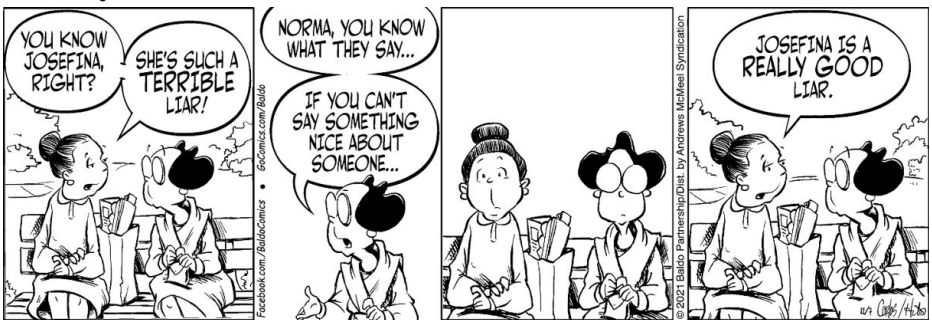
Rex Morgan, M.D. By Terry Beatty



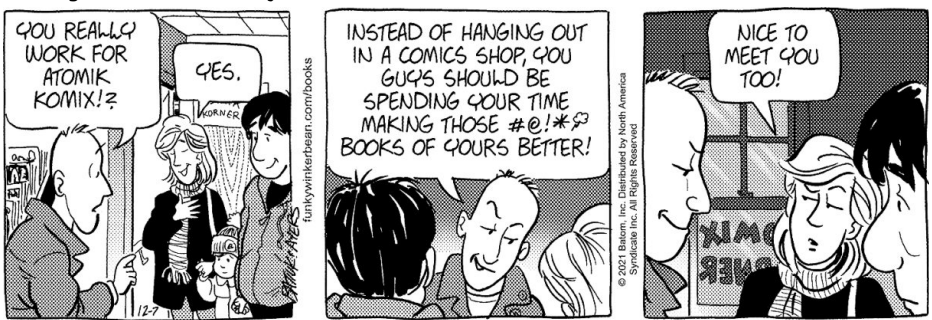
Judge Parker By Woody Wilson and Mike Manley



Baldo By Cantu and Castellanos



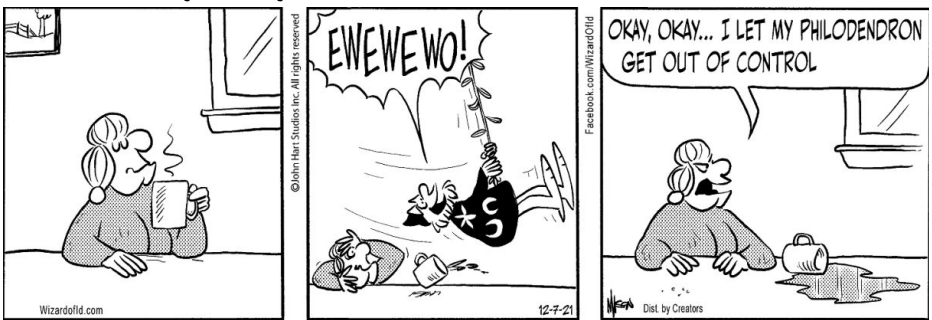
Funky Winkerbean By Tom Batiuk



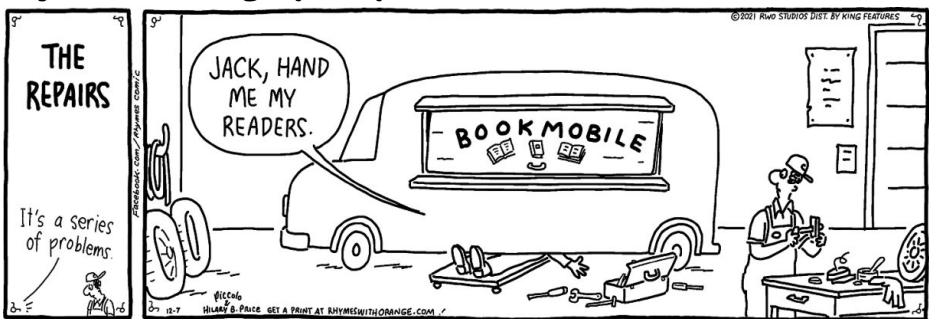
Lio By Mark Tatulli



Wizard Of Id By Johnny Hart and Brant Parker



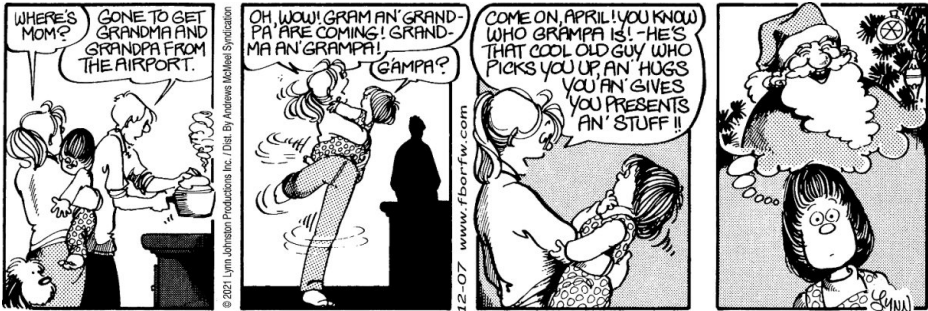
Rhymes With Orange By Hilary Price



Monty By Jim Meddick



For Better Or For Worse By Lynn Johnston



B.C. By Hart



Beetle Bailey by Mort, Greg & Brian Walker



Hi & Lois By Greg and Brian Walker and Chance Browne



Hagar The Horrible By Chris Browne



Non Sequitur By Wiley Miller



Curtis By Ray Billingsley



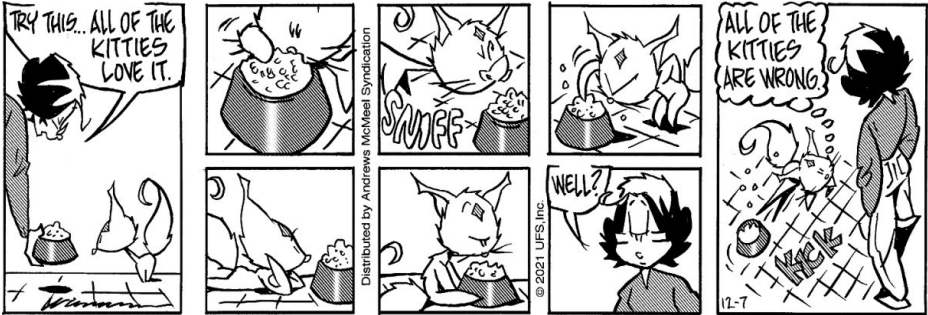
Pickles By Brian Crane



Zits By Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman



Rose Is Rose By Pat Brady and Don Wimmer



Mother Goose And Grimm By Mike Peters



CROSSWORD

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

Across

1 Sneaker feature
5 Balance scale container
8 Plays the role of
14 Milky white gem
15 Focus of modern-day surfing
16 Most achy
17 *Spends time in the gym
19 Shrimp entrée
20 Prime meridian std.
21 Make into law
23 Quaking tree
24 One of the Coen brothers
26 *Upscale eatery service for topper wearers
28 Big-time celeb
31 P-like Greek letter
32 ACLU issues
33 Smell really bad
34 Crosses (out)
36 Antiquated
38 James Taylor classic ... or, respectively, what can precede the two words in each answer to a starred clue " _ on my watch!"
42 Chaney of horror films
44 Where some surfers shop
47 Nonprofit URL ending
50 _ Lingus
52 Ophthalmologist's field
54 *Times Square New Year's Eve custom
57 Calf-length skirts

58 Like the sea when waves are crashing
59 NFL Dolphins' home
62 Bloodshot
63 Broadway's Ethel
65 *When employment ends, formally
67 Cheese in some bagels
68 Freight weight
69 Old Spice competitor
70 Balanced conditions
71 Aardvark's morsel
72 Common flag symbol

Down

1 Transmission choice for steep ascents
2 Biblical disciple
3 One driving the wrong way?
4 Lodge member
5 Menial laborer
6 Océano filler
7 V-shaped slit
8 Pack animal
9 Pepsi rival
10 Vandalize
11 Start of the Marines' motto
12 Appearance
13 Smells really bad
18 Dispatched
22 Driveway material
25 Welcome to one's home
27 Like rosebushes
29 New Hampshire prep school town
30 Actor Stephen
35 NBC weekend show
37 Cinque times due
39 Blowup on the highway
40 Buck's partner
41 Annual hoops player selection event
45 Short operatic solo
46 "Whatever you say, honey"
47 Trumps' White House predecessors
48 Least cooked
49 Vocalist Estefan
51 CD follower
53 Radiate
55 Asian priests
56 Michelangelo masterwork
60 Neural transmitter
61 Like new
64 Turndowns
66 Courtroom figs.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15				16				
17				18				19				
20				21			22		23			
24			25			26		27				
28					29	30		31			32	
33					34		35		36		37	
		38		39			40			41		
			42			43			44		45	46
47	48	49		50		51		52		53		
54			55			56			57			
58					59		60	61			62	
63				64		65				66		
67						68				69		
70						71				72		

By Jeff Stillman Tribune Content Agency 12/7/21

BRIDGE

BY STEVE BECKER

West dealer.
East-West vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ 6 5 2
♥ Q 8 7
♦ 8 5 4
♣ 7 6 4 2

WEST

♠ 10 8 7
♥ 4 3
♦ 10 6 3
♣ J 9 8 5 3

EAST

♠ K J 9 4
♥ K 6
♦ K J 9 2
♣ K Q 10

SOUTH

♠ A Q 3
♥ A J 10 9 5 2
♦ A Q 7
♣ A

The bidding:
West North East South
Pass Pass 1 NT Dble
2 ♣ Pass Pass 4 ♥
Opening lead — five of clubs.

Steppingstone to success

Lack of sufficient entries can be very bothersome at times, and many contracts fail solely because declarer lacks communication from one hand to the other.

This situation is particularly annoying when one or more finesses need to be taken but declarer can't get to the correct hand to make the desired play or plays.

In this deal, for example, if declarer could lead from dummy at will, he could take successful finesses in spades, hearts and diamonds and make 11 tricks.

But with no ready-made entry to dummy, South must play exceedingly well to make even 10 tricks. He knows from the bidding that each of the three possible finesses is sure to succeed, but the best he can hope to do is to tunnel his way into dummy to take two of them.

So after taking the ace of clubs, he leads the jack of hearts at trick two and overtakes it with the queen. (Note that South does not play the ace of hearts first, which would deprive him of a vital entry to dummy.)

East wins the heart with the king and returns a club. Declarer ruffs high in order to preserve his 5-2 as entries to dummy's 8-7.

South next crosses to dummy with a low trump and takes a spade finesse that succeeds, then returns to dummy with another low trump and takes a diamond finesse that succeeds. As a result of this meticulous manipulation of his trumps, South loses only a spade, a heart and a diamond and so makes four hearts.

Tomorrow: Once upon a time.

JUMBLE

BY DAVID HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words:

CEETJ
TMHAC
BRAYCB
DONOEL

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Do you mind switching it to the football game?
We just started watching our show. You'll love it!
It's about a football coach.
HE WANTED TO CHANGE THE CHANNEL TO WATCH THE GAME BUT DIDN'T HAVE A ---

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: YEAST WIPER DONKEY SIMMER
Answer: Mr. Twain predicted his latest story would become popular by saying — MARK MY WORDS

TODAY'S SUDOKU

			7	2		9	8
1					7		4
8			1				
		1	6				
	3		5	4	9		6
			7		2		
			3				5
7		3					2
6	8		9	4			

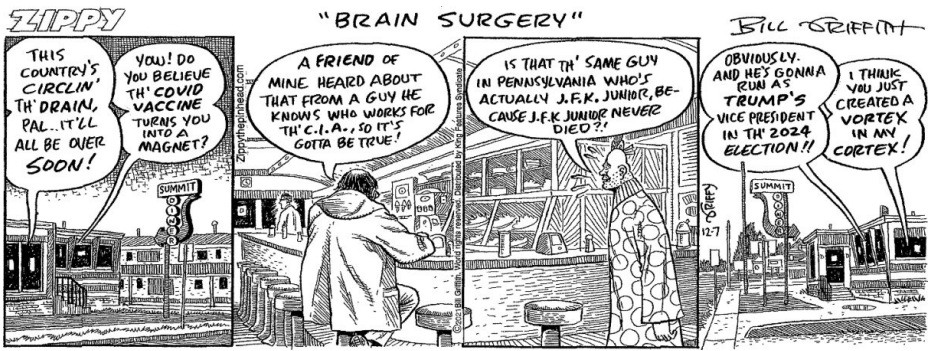
Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudoku.org.uk

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

4	8	5	1	9	7	6	3	2
2	1	9	6	4	3	7	8	5
7	6	3	8	2	5	1	4	9
1	5	6	4	3	2	8	9	7
3	9	4	7	5	8	2	6	1
8	7	2	9	1	6	4	5	3
6	3	1	5	7	4	9	2	8
5	4	7	2	8	9	3	1	6
9	2	8	3	6	1	5	7	4

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS CROSSWORD PUZZLE

S	A	L	S	A		N	A	P	E		R	B	G
C	L	A	I	M		E	D	I	T	S		E	R
R	A	B	B	I		T	H	U	T	C	H		P
E	M	O		E	A	R	L				A	I	L
W	O	R	M		P	U	T	T	Y		K	N	I
				A	C	E			R	E	E	V	E
C	O	B	R	A		N	C	A	A		E	D	A
S	T	R	I	N	G		O	R	C	H	E	S	T
I	S	U	P			O	B	O	E		A	T	O
				N	O	B	L	E		T	R	E	
G	O	O	S	E	F	L	E	S	H		D	A	B
O	R	M	A	N		N	O	E	L		L	I	L
A	D	A		D	O	N	T	B	E	S	I	L	L
P	E	R		S	W	O	R	E		A	D	A	G
E	R	S		E	W	E	R		T	O	N	E	R



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Hartford Courant

SPORTS

COURANT.COM/SPORTS

UCONN WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

If Bueckers misses time, who steps up?



UConn's Olivia Nelson-Ododa reacts after making a shot while being fouled in the first half Sunday against Notre Dame in Storrs. JESSICA HILL/AP

Nelson-Ododa, Ducharme are on the rise heading into Georgia Tech game

By Alexa Philippou
Hartford Courant

Early on in UConn's season, it was largely the Paige Bueckers, Christyn Williams and Evina Westbrook show, as that trio accounted for two-thirds of the Huskies' points across their first four games of the season.

Since the Huskies have returned from the

Battle 4 Atlantis tournament, we've seen flashes of their depth emerge, which will be all the more important with Bueckers possibly missing time due to a left knee injury she suffered at the end of Sunday's win against Notre Dame. As of Monday evening, the school had not shared an update on her status.

Against Seton Hall, Aaliyah Edwards and Dorka Juhász had nice outings. Sunday against the Irish, it was senior Olivia Nelson-Ododa and freshman Caroline Ducharme who stood out most. Sophomore Nika Mühl has also looked to be regaining her form from last season.



Up next
UConn at Georgia Tech
7 p.m. Thursday, ESPN2

Here's more on UConn's emerging depth and who's on the rise heading into the Huskies' next game at Georgia Tech on Thursday:

Caroline Ducharme

After receiving rave reviews this summer/preseason and a strong showing in UConn's

Turn to UConn, Page 4

MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL PATRIOTS AT BILLS



JOSHUA BESSEX/AP

Patriots running back Brandon Bolden gets past Bills safety Micah Hyde for a two-point conversion after a touchdown run by running back Damien Harris in the first half Monday in Orchard Park, N.Y. The game wasn't over in time for this edition. For result and story, go to courant.com/sports/football.

PRIMARY IN THE SECONDARY

Mills has been up for some heavy lifting in Patriots' second level

By Jim McBride
Boston Globe

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Jerod Mayo did a double take. Shortly after Jalen Mills signed with the Patriots in March, the inside linebackers coach was strolling through the team facility when he stumbled upon something he wasn't expecting. "Early on in building our relationship, I walked in the weight room and [Mills] is doing power cleans," said Mayo. "You don't see too many defensive backs doing power cleans. So, I knew right then and there he probably belonged in our room — the linebacker room. He's definitely a tough guy, and it's good to have him here."

The power clean is an explosive

full body exercise popular with the guys that play in and around the trenches. Mills, who is 6 feet, 191 pounds, might not fit the mold of the prototypical front-seven mauler, but he's no stranger to sticking his nose in the dirty areas. "Jalen's come in and done an excellent job for us," said Mayo. "If you remember when he was in Philly, he played a little bit of safety and also corner. So, that versatility is something that we covet here in New England, and his tackling ability is definitely something that stands out. He's done a great job."

The popular belief was that Mills, who spent his first five seasons with the Eagles, would help fill the void left by Patrick Chung's retirement — a player who can play multiple posi-

tions, including coverage duties and run support. It's played out differently. Mills has filled the perimeter cornerback spot previously occupied by Stephon Gilmore, and has started all but one game at right corner. He has adapted to New England's defensive schemes, a diabolical mix of man and zone concepts with a dash of disguises, seamlessly. With J.C. Jackson playing his normal Venus flytrap brand of defense while traveling with the opponent's top receiver, it would be natural to think Mills would be a popular person for quarterbacks to pick on, but that hasn't been the case. Mills has been equal to the tasks for the most part, proving

Turn to Patriots, Page 2

"You don't see too many defensive backs doing power cleans. So, I knew right then and there he probably belonged in our room — the linebacker room. He's definitely a tough guy, and it's good to have him here."

— Jerod Mayo, on Jalen Mills

UCONN MEN'S BASKETBALL

Huskies rise to No. 15 in latest AP poll

By Shreyas Laddha
Hartford Courant

The UConn men's basketball team rose to No. 15 in Associated Press Top 25 men's college basketball poll released Monday despite missing two of its best scoring options. UConn (8-1) went undefeated last week, narrowly defeating Maryland-Eastern Shore 72-63 on Tuesday and dominating Grambling State on Saturday, 88-59. Both wins came without senior guard Tyrese Martin, sidelined 2-4 weeks with a slight sprain and an avulsion fracture in his left wrist. Sophomore forward Adama Sanogo, who suffered an abdominal strain in Tuesday's win, is out at least three weeks. According to CBS Sports' Jon Rothstein, Hurley said there's "a shot" that either Sanogo or Martin could be available for UConn's Big East games before Christmas against either Providence or Marquette. Hurley told Rothstein that Sanogo was "feeling better in the last few days." Purdue claimed the No. 1 spot for the first time with Duke's loss to Ohio State, dropping Duke to third. Defending NCAA champion Baylor moved up to No. 2, and UCLA and Gonzaga rounded out the top five. The Big East has three teams represented in Top 25 with Villanova at No. 6, UConn, and Seton Hall at No. 23. In NCAA's first release of men's basketball NET rankings, UConn was ranked No. 13.

Shreyas Laddha can be reached at sladdha@courant.com.

UCONN FOOTBALL

Team lands pair from Loomis Chaffee School

By Dom Amore
Hartford Courant

UConn football coach Jim Mora began making good on his promise to keep Connecticut talent in state, landing commitments from a pair of Loomis Chaffee School standouts after a week-end filled with official visits. Tight end Denzel Mountali, a native of Vancouver, British Columbia, and cornerback Derek Spearman, originally from Cornelius, North Carolina, announced their decisions on social media. "After an amazing [official visit]," the 6-foot-4, 214-pound Spearman said, "I am excited to announce my commitment to UConn. I will be an early enrollee and want to thank the schools that recruited me." Spearman, a former Princeton commit, is a three-star recruit and No. 124 safety

Turn to Recruits, Page 4

Did you know?

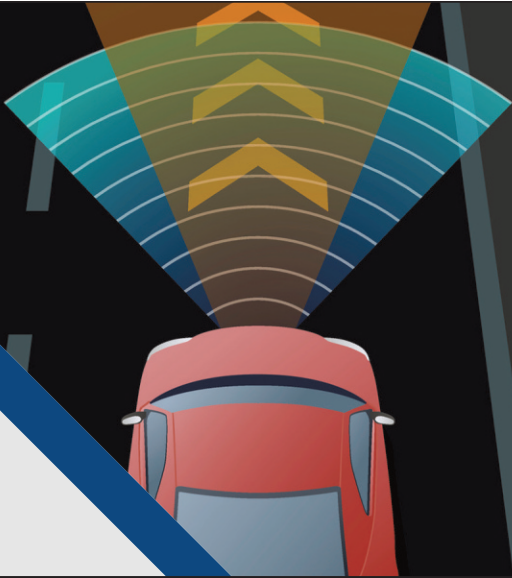
The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety recently found a 7% reduction in crashes for vehicles with a basic forward-collision warning system and a 14% reduction for those with automatic braking.

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SPORTS

UP NEXT

Patriots: Bye; at Colts, Dec. 18, 8:20 p.m.
Giants: at Chargers, Sunday, 4 p.m.
Jets: Saints, Sunday, 1 p.m.
UConn MBB: Big East-Big 12 Battle: at West Virginia, Wednesday, 7 p.m.; Never Forget Tribute Classic: vs. St. Bonaventure (Newark, N.J.), Saturday, 3:30 p.m.; Providence (XL), Dec. 18, 5 p.m.
UConn WBB: at Georgia Tech, Thursday, 7 p.m.; Never Forget Tribute Classic: vs. UCLA (Newark, N.J.), Saturday, 1 p.m.; Basketball Hall of Fame Women's Showcase: vs. Louisville (Mohegan Sun Arena), Dec. 19, 3:30 p.m.
Celtics: at Clippers, Wednesday, 10:30 p.m.; at Suns, Friday, 10 p.m.; Bucks, Monday, 7:30 p.m.
Knicks: at Pacers, Wednesday, 7 p.m.; at Raptors, Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Bucks, Sunday, noon.
Nets: at Rockets, Wednesday, 8 p.m.; at Hawks, Friday, 7:30 p.m.; at Pistons, Sunday, 6 p.m.
UConn hockey: at AIC, Thursday, ppd, COVID; AIC, Saturday, ppd, COVID; at Harvard, Jan. 2, 7 p.m.
Bruins: at Canucks, Wednesday, 9 p.m.; at Oilers, Thursday, 9 p.m.; at Flames, Saturday, 10 p.m.
Rangers: Avalanche, Wednesday, 7 p.m.; at Sabres, Friday, 7 p.m.; Predators, Sunday, 7 p.m.
Wolf Pack: Belleville, Wednesday, ppd, COVID; Lehigh Valley, Friday, 7 p.m.; at Lehigh Valley, Dec. 12, 3 p.m.

TV/RADIO BASKETBALL

6:30 p.m.: Virginia at James Madison. (Live) CBSSN
6:30 p.m.: Vermont at Providence. (Live) FS1
7 p.m.: Jimmy V Classic Texas Tech vs. Tennessee. (Live) ESPN
7 p.m.: Michigan at Nebraska. (Live) ESPN2
7:30 p.m.: Nets at Mavericks. (Live) TNT
8:30 p.m.: Knicks at Spurs. (Live) MSG
8:30 p.m.: Duquesne at DePaul. (Live) FS1
9 p.m.: Butler at Oklahoma. (Live) ESPN2
9 p.m.: Loyola Marymount at Tulsa. (Live) ESPNU
9:30 p.m.: Jimmy V Classic Villanova vs. Syracuse. (Live) ESPN
10 p.m.: Celtics at Lakers. (Live) TNT
HOCKEY
8:30 p.m.: Rangers at Blackhawks. (Live) MSG2
SOCCER
9:50 a.m.: FS2 — FIFA Arab World Cup Group Stage Morocco vs. Saudi Arabia, Group C. (Live) FS2
1:50 p.m.: FIFA Arab World Cup Group Stage Algeria vs. Egypt, Group D. (Live) FS1
1:50 p.m.: FS2 — FIFA Arab World Cup Group Stage Lebanon vs. Sudan, Group D. (Live) FS2
TENNIS
6 a.m.: Florianopolis-ATP Challenger, Maia-ATP Challenger Early Rounds. (Live) TENNIS
2:30 p.m.: Florianopolis-ATP Challenger Early Rounds. (Live) TENNIS
WINTER SPORTS
1:30 p.m.: Men's Curling Olympic Qualifying U.S. vs. New Zealand, Mixed-Doubles. (Live) NBCSN

GIANTS

Club closing in on 5th straight losing season

By Tom Canavan
Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — As the losses mounted over the course of the season, the New York Giants could always look at the standings in the weak NFC and recognize they were a game or so out of a wild-card playoff berth.

It's time to end the wishful thinking. The Giants (4-8) are going nowhere in 2021, other than probably back to the drawing board.

With their 20-9 loss to Miami, New York is on the verge of a fifth straight losing record, and fifth straight year out of the postseason. Not only did the Giants lose backup quarterback Mike Glennon — who was starting for the injured Daniel Jones (neck) and sustained a concussion — but New York might be forced to start inexperienced Jacob Fromm, the former Georgia star who was signed off the Bills' practice squad last week.

The step forward Giants fans anticipated after a 6-10 first season under rookie coach Joe Judge has turned into a leap backward. Just watch the replay of Sunday's loss, an awful performance.

Remember this sequence in the



Time might be running out for Giants coach Joe Judge as the team is likely to miss the playoffs for the fifth consecutive season. **LYNNE SLADKY/AP**

third quarter. With a first-and-10 at their 27, Glennon was sacked on consecutive plays, losing 20 yards. On third-and-30 from the New York 7, there was a delay-of-game call.

That Judge said after the game he saw progress is baffling.

It seems a rebuild is once again on the horizon. General manager Dave Gettleman probably won't be asked to oversee this one, and there

are questions whether Judge is kept around if a new GM is hired.

And what should co-owner John Mara's role should be? He has been the face of the franchise since his father, Wellington, died in October 2005. Over the past six years he has fired coach Tom Coughlin and hired, then fired Ben McAdoo and Pat Shurmur in hopes of returning the Giants to their glory

days; they won Super Bowls in February 2008 and '12. The only year New York has made the playoffs since then was 2016, and that resulted in a first-round exit as a wild card.

Certainly an option would be to give Judge one more year to try to make a big jump. It's more likely that the Giants will hire a new general manager, who will decide Judge's future.

Injury report: Glennon sustained a concussion in the game, and his status for Sunday is uncertain. With Jones' status also uncertain, Fromm may get his first NFL regular-season action. Brian Lewerke of the practice squad would be his backup. Lewerke also hasn't played in a real NFL game. ... WR Kenny Golladay's ribs will be a concern this week. The Giants have to hope receivers Sterling Shepard (quad) and Kadarius Toney (oblique/quad) are ready to return.

Up next: The Giants are training in Tucson, Arizona, to get ready for Sunday's game in Los Angeles against the Chargers, who have beaten them four straight. This will be their first game against the Chargers in Los Angeles since the team moved from San Diego in 2016.



Quarterback Zach Wilson led the Jets to touchdowns on their first three drives Sunday against the Eagles. **SETH WENIG/AP**

JETS

Wilson provides optimism in rough loss to Eagles

By Dennis Waszak Jr.
Associated Press

NEW YORK — The New York Jets' defense was brutal again. All the positive feelings after a solid effort last week slipped away, like a missed tackle, and the Jets had plenty of those Sunday.

Now what? Well, that's a seasonlong work in progress.

But so has been the development of rookie quarterback Zach Wilson, and that's where the glimmer of hope was found in New York's 33-18 loss to Philadelphia.

Wilson had arguably his best game in the NFL, especially the first half — a period during which he has struggled mightily this season. He finished 23 of 38 for 226 yards and two touchdowns with an interception, and a TD run, but it wasn't so much the numbers as it was the decision-making and playmaking that were markedly better.

"Yeah, there were definitely improvements," Wilson said after the game. "I thought I had some good plays as far as just putting my team in the best decision that I can make every single time and just processing as far as getting through guys.

"Now, the next step comes from finding that balance from how I can now go out and use my playmaking ability and also stay within the offense 99% of the time"

That's what this final stretch of five games is all about for the Jets (3-9). They need to get

their quarterback in a groove to where they know the No. 2 overall draft pick has taken significant steps — physically and mentally — heading into the offseason.

"His footwork was awesome," coach Robert Saleh said. "His eyes, his tempo, playing within the scheme and not trying to over-analyze. Not trying to make defenses pay just because you might know what they're in. I thought this was, by far, his best game in terms of just working progression and playing within the scheme."

Wilson was 12 of 14 for 108 yards and his two TD passes and scoring run in the first half, when the Jets trailed 24-18. He went scoring drive for scoring drive with the Eagles and Gardner Minshew — each getting TDs on their first three offensive possessions.

The run ended on the Jets' fourth possession, when they went three-and-out. The defense couldn't tackle, with defensive coordinator Jeff Ulbrich saying New York had 15 misses. And the Eagles held the ball for all but 70 seconds in the third quarter.

"I wish we could have kept him in rhythm in the second half," Saleh said, "because I thought he was getting ready to have an explosive game overall."

Injury report: WR Corey Davis is having core muscle surgery Tuesday, ending his season. ... CB Michael Carter II is in the concussion protocol. ... RG Laurent Duvernay-Tardif is day to day with an ankle injury.

Patriots

from Page 1

to be a vital cog in a defense that harasses the quarterback and leads the league in interceptions.

"We count on him. We count on him to play well — all those guys at corner," said safety Devin McCourty. "In this league, you won't win many games if you don't play well at the corner position."

Mills, who is known for his trademark Green Goblin hair, brings a ton of energy to the defense. Coach Bill Belichick recently called him the "defensive Kendrick Bourne," and his teammates definitely feed off it.

His quick assimilation is what's really impressed his coach.

"He's always ready to go, very durable, tough, out there all the time. He has a good, physical style of play, generally tackles well in the running game, jams receivers, and has good instincts. He's around the ball. He's done a nice job for us," said Belichick. "It's a different system than what he played in Philadelphia, but I think he's adapted to it well."

"He's a good all-around football player. He's good in all areas and continues to learn a little bit more about the system that he's

in, and also working with teammates like Myles [Bryant] as opposed to Jon Jones earlier in the year. ... Jalen's been a really solid addition for us. I'm glad we have him. I love his versatility and his overall play style."

Kyle Dugger unavailable: Safety Kyle Dugger missed Monday night's showdown against the Bills, remaining on the Reserve/COVID-19 list. Dugger's status for the game became a question mark Wednesday, when he did not practice after testing positive for the virus. He has not returned to the field.

Bryant, a second-year safety, took on an increased role in Dugger's absence. The Patriots also temporarily elevated safety Sean Davis off the practice squad.

New England's defense did get one contributor back. Linebacker Jamie Collins was officially activated off injured reserve after missing three games. The Patriots also elevated defensive lineman Daniel Ekuale off the practice squad, as they did in Weeks 7 and 8.

The Bills, meanwhile, placed linebacker A.J. Klein on the Reserve/COVID-19 list Monday evening.

The Globe's Nicole Yang contributed to this report.



Bills wide receiver Gabriel Davis hauls in a pass from Josh Allen for a touchdown with Patriots cornerback Jalen Mills defending Monday night in Orchard Park, N.Y. **ADRIAN KRAUS/AP**

REGIONAL DIGEST

Wolf Pack's 4th straight game postponed due to COVID-19 protocols

The Hartford Wolf Pack's game Wednesday night against the Belleville Senators at the XL Center has been postponed because of COVID-19 protocols affecting the Wolf Pack, the AHL announced Monday.

It's the fourth consecutive game postponed for the team. The Wolf Pack haven't played since a 4-2 loss to the Thunderbirds in Springfield on Nov. 27. Their next scheduled game is Friday against the Lehigh Valley Phantoms, at 7 p.m. at the XL Center.

The Pack's Dec. 3 game at Providence will be made up April 4 at 7 p.m. Makeup dates for the three postponed games at the XL Center are yet to be determined. Details will be announced at a later date.

For Wednesday night's home game, season ticket holders are asked to hold onto their tickets for the new date, which will be announced shortly. All group purchasers will be contacted by their sales representative. For single game buyers, you can exchange your ticket at the Sunwave Gas and Power Ticket Office for any 2021-22 Wolf Pack home game. You may also call 860-727-8010.

— Staff report

KNICKS

No easy solutions to glut of problems

By Stefan Bondy
New York Daily News

If you've listened to enough NBA press conferences from the losing team, you know you're about to hear about a lack of focus, energy, effort and all that good stuff.

These are the well-worn excuses. Why? They're easily fixed and cast aside as one-offs. It's harder to explain roster construction or coaching problems or poor talent. Fans probably don't enjoy hearing they paid \$150 to watch their team give 68% effort, but it's reassuring to believe players need only to "try harder" to win the next game. No follow-ups necessary.

Which brings us to the Knicks. Effort and intensity have become the common theme in post-game press

conferences. After the Knicks (11-12) dropped their third straight game Saturday afternoon — falling below .500 for the first time this season — RJ Barrett hit us with this gem: "We just have to care."

Barrett added that the Knicks actually care, but they just have to be more intense for all 48 minutes. He was stuck in cliché zone. Joe Judge would be proud.

"We've just got to fight, bro. At the end of the day, all the X's and O's, all that doesn't matter," Barrett said. "We've got to play defense. We've got to fight and fight together for the whole game and just do whatever it takes to win."

Here's the reality: The Knicks aren't as good defensively because they're giving up wide-open 3-pointers and, unlike last season, the opposi-

tion is knocking them down. They went from first in defensive 3-point percentage last season to 20th. They went from 10th in 3-point shots allowed per game to 25th.

They're still protecting the paint fairly well — although injuries to Nerlens Noel and Mitchell Robinson have hurt that cause — but adding guards with defensive deficiencies has predictably deteriorated the perimeter. They look older and slower.

Coach Tom Thibodeau understands there's a problem beyond motivating the Knicks into hustling, which is why the coach said he's mulling another lineup change before Tuesday's game against the Spurs.

On offense, the struggles are easy to identify and difficult to remedy. The two best players

— Barrett and Julius Randle — have regressed to their shooting mean.

Seemingly out of nowhere last season, they became efficient 3-point marksmen. But Barrett, who shot over 40% last season on treys, has dipped to 31% (about the same as his rookie season and lone season at Duke). Randle, who shot 41% from beyond the arc last season, has fallen to 32% (a lot closer to his career average of 34%).

Randle has also lost some confidence in the shot, preferring lately to back down his defender or attack the paint. On Saturday, for instance, Randle struggled with his treys and was left wide open by the Nuggets in the third quarter. He opted to drive into traffic rather than taking the shot.

SCOREBOARD

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE				
ATLANTIC	W	L	PCT	GB
Brooklyn	16	7	.696	—
Boston	13	11	.542	3 1/2
Philadelphia	12	11	.522	4
New York	11	12	.478	5
Toronto	11	13	.458	5 1/2

SOUTHEAST				
W	L	PCT	GB	
Miami	14	10	.583	—
Charlotte	14	11	.560	1/2
Washington	14	11	.560	1/2
Atlanta	12	12	.500	2
Orlando	5	19	.208	9

CENTRAL				
W	L	PCT	GB	
Chicago	16	8	.667	—
Milwaukee	15	9	.625	1
Cleveland	13	11	.542	3
Indiana	10	16	.385	7
Detroit	4	19	.174	11 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE				
SOUTHWEST				
W	L	PCT	GB	
Memphis	13	10	.565	—
Dallas	11	11	.500	1 1/2
San Antonio	8	13	.381	4
Houston	7	16	.304	6
New Orleans	7	19	.269	7 1/2

NORTHWEST				
W	L	PCT	GB	
Utah	16	7	.696	—
Denver	11	11	.500	4 1/2
Minnesota	11	12	.478	5
Portland	11	13	.458	5 1/2
Oklahoma City	7	16	.304	9

PACIFIC				
W	L	PCT	GB	
Golden State	19	4	.826	—
Phoenix	19	4	.826	—
L.A. Clippers	12	12	.500	7 1/2
L.A. Lakers	12	12	.500	7 1/2
Sacramento	10	14	.417	9 1/2

MONDAY'S RESULTS
Indiana 116, Washington 110
Oklahoma City 114, Detroit 103
Philadelphia at Charlotte, late
Memphis at Miami, late
Atlanta at Minnesota, late
Cleveland at Milwaukee, late
Denver at Chicago, late
San Antonio at Phoenix, late
L.A. Clippers at Portland, late
Orlando at Golden State, late

TUESDAY'S GAMES
Brooklyn at Dallas, 7:30p.m.
New York at San Antonio, 8:30p.m.
Boston at L.A. Lakers, 10p.m.

SUNDAY'S RESULTS
Utah 109, Cleveland 108
Charlotte 130, Atlanta 127
Toronto 102, Washington 90
Houston 118, New Orleans 108

TENNIS

WTA OPEN ANGERS ARENA LOIRE
Arenia Loire, Angers, France, hard-out
WOMEN'S SINGLES, ROUND OF 32
#2 Zhang Shuai d. Ylena In-Albon, 6-3, 6-3.
Julia Grabher d. #5 Varvara Gracheva, 6-4, 6-3.
Anna Blinkova d. Anastasia Zakharova, 6-2, 6-3.
Jessica Ponchet d. Tamara Korpatsch, 6-3, 6-1.

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE									
EAST	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA			
New England	8	4	0	.667	336	190			
Buffalo	7	4	0	.636	326	182			
Miami	6	7	0	.462	254	288			
N.Y. Jets	3	9	0	.250	217	367			

SOUTH									
W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA				
Tennessee	8	4	0	.667	340	290			
Indianapolis	7	6	0	.538	371	283			
Houston	2	10	0	.167	164	323			
Jacksonville	2	10	0	.167	180	320			

NORTH									
W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA				
Baltimore	8	4	0	.667	282	260			
Cincinnati	7	5	0	.583	331	267			
Pittsburgh	6	5	1	.542	244	286			
Cleveland	6	6	0	.500	254	267			

WEST									
W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA				
Kansas City	8	4	0	.667	303	259			
L.A. Chargers	7	5	0	.583	314	315			
Denver	6	6	0	.500	237	218			
Las Vegas	6	6	0	.500	274	312			

NATIONAL CONFERENCE									
EAST	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA			
Dallas	8	4	0	.667	353	267			
Washington	6	6	0	.500	246	297			
Philadelphia	6	7	0	.462	337	291			
N.Y. Giants	4	8	0	.333	211	273			

SOUTH									
W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA				
Tampa Bay	9	3	0	.750	377	270			
Atlanta	5	7	0	.417	216	332			
Carolina	5	7	0	.417	236	253			
New Orleans	5	7	0	.417	274	276			

NORTH									
W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA				
Green Bay	9	3	0	.750	283	242			
Minnesota	5	7	0	.417	308	305			
Chicago	4	8	0	.333	201	287			
Detroit	1	10	1	.125	203	316			

WEST									
W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA				
Arizona	10	2	0	.833	343	224			
L.A. Rams	8	4	0	.667	336	270			
San Francisco	6	6	0	.500	303	278			
Seattle	4	8	0	.333	239	249			

MONDAY'S RESULT
New England at Buffalo, late
THURSDAY'S GAME
Pittsburgh at Minnesota, 8:20p.m.
SUNDAY'S DEC. 12
Atlanta at Carolina, 1p.m.
Baltimore at Cleveland, 1p.m.
Dallas at Washington, 1p.m.
Jacksonville at Tennessee, 1p.m.
Las Vegas at Kansas City, 1p.m.
New Orleans at N.Y. Jets, 1p.m.
Seattle at Houston, 1p.m.
Detroit at Denver, 4:05p.m.
N.Y. Giants at L.A. Chargers, 4:05p.m.
Buffalo at Tampa Bay, 4:25p.m.
San Francisco at Cincinnati, 4:25p.m.
Chicago at Green Bay, 8:20p.m.

MONDAY, DEC. 13
L.A. Rams at Arizona, 8:15p.m.
Off: Indianapolis, Miami.
New England, Philadelphia

LATE SUNDAY:
KANSAS CITY 22, DENVER 9
Denver 0 3 0 6 - 9
Kansas City 10 0 3 9 - 22

First Quarter
KC: Mahomes 10run (Butker kick), 6:56.
KC: FG Butker 56, 2:22.

Second Quarter
Den: FG Manus 42, 13:34.

Third Quarter
KC: FG Butker 45, 5:35.

Fourth Quarter
KC: FG Butker 26, 13:26.

KC: Sorensen 75interception return (kick failed), 9:42.

Den: J.Williams 13pass from Bridgewater (pass failed), 5:12.

TEAM STATS
DEN **KC**
First downs 22 15
Total net yards 404 267
Rushes-yards 31-154 24-89
Passing 250 178
Punt returns 3-6 2-13
Kickoff returns 2-44 0-0
Interceptions ret. 1-0 2-88
Comp-att-int 22-40-2 15-29-1
Sacked-yards lost 1-7 1-6
Punts 3-53.333 3-47.5
Fumbles-lost 13 2-1 0-0
Penalties-yards 5-37 7-60
Time of possession 33:30 26:30

RUSHING: Denver, J.Williams 23-102, Boone 4-35, Bridgewater 4-17, Kansas City, Edwards-Helaire 14-54, Williams 5-20, Mahomes 4-12, Burton 1-3.

PASSING: Denver, Bridgewater 22-40-2-57, Kansas City, Mahomes 15-29-1-184.

RECEIVING: Denver, J.Williams 6-76, Jeurdy 4-77, Fant 4-33, Okwuegbunam 3-21, Sutton 2-15, Boone 1-19, T.Patrick 1-9, Hinton 1-7, Kansas City, Williams 3-60, Edwards-Helaire 3-28, Kelce 3-27, Hill 2-22, Robinson 2-21, Pringle 1-14, Hardman 1-12.

TACKLES-ASSISTS-SACKS: Denver, Browning 7-1-0, Young 5-4-0, D.Jones 3-1-1, Kansas City, Mathieu 7-2-0, Ward 5-3-0, Gay 4-4-5, Ingram 1-2-5.

INTERCEPTIONS: Denver, Surtain 1-0, KC, Sorensen 1-75, Thornhill 1-13.

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE									
ATLANTIC	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA		
Florida	24	17	4	3	37	93	67		
Toronto	26	17	7	2	36	80	62		
Tampa Bay	24	15	5	4	34	81	65		
Detroit	25	13	9	3	29	71	78		
Boston	21	12	8	1	25	61	56		
Buffalo	24	8	13	3	19	70	90		
Montreal	26	6	17	3	15	59	93		
Ottawa	22	6	15	1	13	57	86		

METRO.									
GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA			
Washington	25	15	4	6	36	88	62		
N.Y. Rangers	23	16	4	3	35	58	57		
Carolina	23	16	5	1	33	75	52		
Pittsburgh	24	11	8	5	27	69	67		
Columbus	23	13	10	0	26	76	75		
New Jersey	22	9	9	4	22	65	76		
Philadelphia	22	8	10	4	20	51	72		
N.Y. Islanders	20	5	10	5	15	38	61		

WESTERN CONFERENCE									
CENTRAL	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA		
Minnesota	24	17	6	1	35	92	71		
Winnipeg	24	12	8	4	28	74	68		
St. Louis	24	12	8	4	28	80	70		
Nashville	24	13	10	1	27	68	68		
Colorado	21	12	7	2	26	85	71		
Dallas	21	12	7	2	26	60	58		
Chicago	24	9	13	2	20	54	75		
Arizona	24	5	17	2	12	43	89		

PACIFIC									
GP	W	L	OT	PTS	GF	GA			
Calgary	25	15	5	5	35	81	51		
Edmonton	23	16	0	4	32	86	70		
Anaheim	25	13	8	4	30	84	74		
Vegas	24	14	10	0	28	81	73		
San Jose	25	13	11	1	27	66	68		
Los Angeles	23	10	9	4	24	64	63		
Seattle	24	9	13	2	20	72	84		
Vancouver	25	8	15	2	18	60	80		

NOTE: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

MONDAY'S RESULTS
Anaheim at Washington, late
Colorado at Philadelphia, late
Ottawa at New Jersey, late
Arizona at Dallas, late
Los Angeles at Vancouver, late
Pittsburgh at Seattle, late

TUESDAY'S GAMES
Columbus at Toronto, 7p.m.
N.Y. Islanders at Ottawa, 7p.m.
Nashville at Detroit, 7p.m.
Tampa Bay at Montreal, 7p.m.
Anaheim at Buffalo, 7:30p.m.
Carolina at Winnipeg, 8p.m.
Florida at St. Louis, 8p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Chicago, 8:30p.m.
Minnesota at Edmonton, 9:30p.m.
Calgary at San Jose, 10:30p.m.

SUNDAY'S RESULTS
Columbus 6, San Jose 4
Tampa Bay 7, Philadelphia 1
Chicago 3, N.Y. Islanders 2, SO
Los Angeles 5, Edmonton 1
Winnipeg 6, Toronto 3
Vegas 3, Calgary 2

ODDS

COLLEGE BASKETBALL				
FAVORITE	LINE	UNDERDOG		
Virginia	6	at James Madison		
Old Dominion	7	at Wm. & Mary		
Oakland	1 1/2	at Bowling Green		
at Toledo	6	Bradley		
Michigan	7	at Nebraska		
at Tennessee	2 1/2	Texas Tech		
at Northeastern	2	UMass		
at Missouri	18 1/2	E. Illinois		
at Saint Louis	1 1/2	Belmont		
at Vanderbilt	8	Temple		
at N. Colorado	8 1/2	S. Dakota		
at Tulane	4	Cleveland State		
at Kansas	20 1/2	UTEP		
at DePaul	8	Duequesne		
at Oklahoma	10	Butler		
at Arkansas	20	Charlotte		
at Tulsa	2 1/2	Loyola Marymt		
at Montana State	3 1/2	North Dakota St		
Villanova	9	at Syracuse		
at Calif Baptist	1 1/2	North Dakota		
Boise State	11 1/2	at CS N'rthridge		

NBA				
FAVORITE	LINE	O/U	UNDERDOG	
Dallas	off	(off)	Brooklyn	
New York	2 1/2	(212 1/2)	at San Antonio	
at LA Lakers	off	(off)	Boston	

NFL				
FAVORITE	LINE	UNDERDOG	Line	
Tampa Bay	-172	at Montreal	+142	
at Toronto	-282	Columbus	+224	
Nashville	-118	at Detroit	-102	

MEN'S BASKETBALL
Wednesday: at West Virginia, 7 p.m., ESPN2

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
Thursday: at Georgia Tech, 7 p.m., ESPN2

UConn
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UConn

from Page 1

exhibition, Ducharme looked rushed and was turnover-prone in her first few real games.

She appeared to be turning the corner Sunday. She started the fourth quarter, with Notre Dame trailing by seven, and scored 14 of the Huskies' 22 points, their highest scoring period of the game.

"When Caroline came in," Auriemma said, "I think she changed the complexion of the game."

Ducharme first got on the board with a drive into the lane, sinking a hook shot. Later on, she slashed to the hoop again and scored off a reverse layup. The freshman also made the first 3-pointers of her young career, going 3 for 5 overall, by hitting one near the baseline on an inbounds play and two more from wing.

Ducharme said her approach was to "[be] aggressive and try not to overthink things. I think the last few games, I've just been overthinking what I needed to do, and today I just tried to go out and play and not think about things too much ... just having fun and enjoying it, and taking shots that are open and not overthinking about making a mistake or taking bad shots."

Ducharme wasn't expected to play a big role as a freshman with so much backcourt depth, but with Westbrook and Williams inconsistent from 3, and Bueckers and sharp-shooter Azzi Fudd injured, the freshman's 3-point shooting and ability to create for herself off the bounce could be an invaluable asset for UConn.

"Playing a game like today on national television, against Notre Dame and all that, I think that's going to help her a ton going forward," Auriemma said.

Olivia Nelson-Ododa

Nelson-Ododa may not have shined the first few games of the season, but she did when it mattered most during UConn's battle against top-ranked South Carolina. Her defensive presence was a big reason why the Huskies led most of the first half, and she played with a tenacity that hasn't always been noticeable in her game.

Since then, Nelson-Ododa has looked much more aggressive, answering the coaching staff's call for the bigs to crash the glass.

There's also an element of personal motivation driving her.

"That loss was heartbreaking for me," Nelson-Ododa said. "I took that very personal and ever since then, just really try to be intentional in practice about what I'm doing, how I'm doing things and just listening to the coaching staff."

"I think that really illuminated for her, 'This is what I can be,'" Auriemma said. "Because we can talk about it all we want, we can show her film and we can do all the things that most coaches do with their players, but [it doesn't matter as much] until you actually do it, until you actually experience it."

"I bet you for the first time in her career at UConn, Liv was really devastated after that South Carolina game. I think a lot of it has to do with what she put into it, and the more you put into it, the more it hurts when you're not successful at the end of the game."

The one thing missing from Nelson-Ododa in that loss was an aggression on the offensive end, but she came out with that Sunday, her 14-point,



UConn's Caroline Ducharme is double-teamed by Notre Dame's Sonia Citron, left, and Maya Dodson on Sunday at Gampel Pavilion. **CLOE POISSON/SPECIAL TO THE COURANT**

13-rebound performance marking her first double-double of the season. She largely succeeded by creating second-chance opportunities for herself.

Auriemma also wants her to play smarter on defense so she doesn't get into foul trouble as she did Sunday.

"Still not there yet, but we're way ahead of where we were before, and I'm guessing it's going to keep getting better," Auriemma said.

Nika Mühl

Auriemma has repeatedly pointed out that the Huskies' offense isn't operating smoothly, in part because not enough players are making outside shots. Ducharme can help with that. The same can be said for the defensive-minded Mühl, who on Sunday made her first two triples after missing her previous six attempts on the season.

Even on Friday at Seton Hall, Mühl looked more like herself, or as Auriemma put it, "like an assassin from Croatia." He reiterated that the team needs her minutes, but that she needs to help herself by staying out of foul trouble.

Assuming Bueckers misses time, Mühl will have to step up even more as a point guard. She hasn't done very much facilitating this season, with only

five assists through six games and a 0.71 assist-to-turnover ratio.

UConn falls to No. 3 in AP rankings

UConn fell to No. 3 in Associated Press Top 25 poll after being tied for second with NC State the week before. This week, NC State (which got a big win over Indiana) bested UConn 708-700 for second place. Future Huskies opponent Tennessee entered the top 10 with a No. 9 ranking while Louisville, which UConn plays in two weeks, sits at No. 7.

Bueckers wins Big East player of the week

As the basketball world awaits news regarding the seriousness of Bueckers' injury, the sophomore took home Big East player of the week for the second time this season after averaging a conference-best 22.5 points and 5.0 steals in two games, while her 5.5 assists per contest ranked second in the league.

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HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER

UConn-bound Hall striker Almeida named to United Soccer Coaches All-America team

By Lori Riley
Hartford Courant

Hall High School junior striker Lucas Almeida, who has committed to play soccer at UConn, was named to the United Soccer Coaches High School Boys All-America Team on Monday.

Almeida had 34 goals and eight assists in the regular season for Hall, which lost to eventual state champion Farmington in the Class LL tournament quarterfinals on penalty kicks.

Other state boys players named to the team were Canton's Spencer Mix, Ledyard's Nicholas Washington, Weston's Max Weiss and Stonington's Samuel Montalto. All are seniors.

Melina Ford, a junior from Mercy, was named to the United Soccer Coaches High School Girls All-America Team, as was Westminster



Hall's Lucas Almeida (No. 11) was named to the United Soccer Coaches High School All-America team Monday. **COURANT FILE**

junior Jillian Gregorski. Other state girls players named were Wilton's Erynn Floyd, Staples' Gabriela Gonzalez and Mary Lundregan of St. Joseph in Trumbull.

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Recruits

from Page 1

in the nation according to 247sports with offers from Georgetown, Purdue, Miami, UAB and FIU.

Loomis Chaffee finished 9-1 to win the New England prep title with a victory over Milton Academy on Nov. 22. Mountali was first team All-Founders League on offense, Spearman on defense.

"Thank you to all of the coaches who have coached and mentored me into the player I am today," the 6-5, 230-pound Mountali said via Twitter. "Time to work."

Mountali is not ranked by 247sports but had offers from Marshall, Yale, Columbia and Fordham.

They join Brady Wayburn, a 6-foot-6, 290-pound three-star offensive lineman at Loomis Chaffee who had previously committed to UConn and reaffirmed his commitment Sunday.

Mora, who took over the UConn program on Nov. 28, has been traveling across the state, attending high school games and visiting coaches. Over the weekend, he stayed on campus and hosted about a dozen potential recruits for official visits, including 6-0, 190-pound three-star quarterback Elijah Warner, the son of NFL Hall-of-Famer Kurt Warner who threw for 2,746 yards and 26 touchdowns for Brophy College Prep in Phoenix.

Victor Rosa, the versatile 6-0, 193-pound Bristol Central quarterback, also

appears to have locked in his commitment to the Huskies. "We're locked in, ready to work," Rosa tweeted during his official visit. Rosa led Bristol Central to the Class L quarterfinals, where the Rams lost to Maloney, 49-14. He finished with 41 rushing touchdowns and eight passing touchdowns this season and is a three-star athlete ranked No. 139 in the nation according to 247sports.

Donovan Branch, a Winter Garden Foundation Academy defensive end from Florida who committed to UConn while Randy Edsall was coach, had re-opened his recruitment. Branch is back in the Huskies' fold. "I'm coming home," Branch said via Twitter on Sunday night.

Stroudsburg (Pa.) 6-4, 230-pound two-star DE Nathan Voorhis also re-committed after this weekend's visit. He had offers from William & Mary, Lehigh University, Holy Cross, Youngstown State, Lafayette and Colgate.

Among the many players also receiving offers over the weekend were Tyrone Brown, outside linebacker from Baylor who is in the NCAA transfer portal; former Delaware and current junior college running back Will Knight; Class of 2023 four-star athlete Mikal Harrison-Pilot from Temple High School in Texas; and former Baylor DE Bralen Taylor from Butler Community College in Kansas.

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YANKEES

Minor league hitting coordinator Lawson promoted to bigs

By Kristie Ackert
New York Daily News

The Yankees continue to invest in analytics.

The Bombers are promoting their minor league hitting coordinator Dillon Lawson to the major league staff, sources confirmed to the Daily News.

With Major League Baseball having instituted a lockout, the only business big league front offices can do right now is shape their coaching staffs and work on their minor league rosters — the Yankees added infielder Jose Peraza on a minor league deal, according to the MLB.com transaction wire, a move which restocks their utility players after they cut ties with Tyler Wade and Rougned

Odor.

They also are promoting Desi Druschel to become assistant pitching coach from the team's minor league manager of pitch development. The new hires were first reported by The Athletic.

Both are hires in the mold of when the Yankees hired Matt Blake to be the pitching coach before the 2020 season and show that despite no recent success — one division title — since 2009 the Yankees are doubling down on their analytics-driven decisions and eschewing experience.

The Yankees hired Lawson out of the college ranks, where he was a coach at Southeast Missouri State and Missouri. He also worked in the Astros' organization.

Lawson, who will also have an

assistant hitting coach, replaces Marcus Thames, whose contract, along with assistant hitting coach P.J. Pilittere's, was not renewed after a rough season for the Yankees offense.

There is no question the Yankees offense disappointed this season.

Built on power hitters and to overwhelm their opponents with offense, the Yankees finished only seventh in the American League in OPS (.729), 10th in runs scored (711) and were fourth in strikeouts (1,482). That had fans calling for the heads of Thames and Pilittere.

But how does a hitting coach directly correlate to players' performances? They are the same hitting coaches that had the Yankees leading the league in OPS in 2020 and runs scored in 2019.

Just as it was not surprising Thames and Pilittere paid for the Bombers impotent offense with their jobs, it was hardly surprising they promoted Lawson. Several veteran hitting coaches around the majors suggested that would happen and GM Brian Cashman hinted of the move to hire Lawson earlier this offseason, when he said he wanted more continuity between the minor and major league hitting programs. The Yankees were impressed with Lawson's work with their prospects.

Lawson explained his approach to The Times-Tribune of Scranton, Pa., in July while working with the club's Triple-A players. He said the organization's goal was "to square the ball up more, which in turn

is going to increase average exit velocity."

The Yankees do have some solid exit velocity numbers. Aaron Judge and Giancarlo Stanton are consistently among the hardest hitters in the big leagues. Others saw some drop-off, particularly this year.

"It's trying to create some sort of bridge from the training environment to the game, and connecting the cage to the advanced information to observing the game in the dugout, and then finally getting your name put in the lineup," Lawson told the paper.

Like when they hired Blake to be the pitching coach in 2020, the Yankees are bringing in a coach in Lawson who has no experience in-game with major league hitting.

Safety Tip of the Day

Driveway or walkways icy and the outside temperatures super cold? Use an ice melt with calcium chloride. It works at temperatures below 5° F. It can even melt ice at temperatures as low as -25° F.

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NATIONAL SPORTS REPORT

SHORTS

Cristobal back to Miami as coach



Mario Cristobal is going home again. Cristobal is leaving Oregon and returning to Miami, accepting an offer to become head coach at his alma mater, where he won two national championships as a player. Miami announced Monday the firing of coach Manny Diaz after three seasons. Cristobal, 51, and Miami were finalizing terms on a 10-year, \$80 million deal, by far the richest the Hurricanes ever have given a coach. Diaz went 21-15 in three seasons. Miami reportedly also expects to complete the hiring of Dan Radakovich as athletic director this week. Radakovich has been AD at Clemson but started his career in sports administration 40 years ago at Miami, where he got one of his degrees. Cristobal was 35-13 at Oregon, with two Pac-12 titles and a Rose Bowl victory on his resume. He played at Miami, was part of the 1989 and 1991 title-winning teams and returned to the Hurricanes to start his coaching career as a graduate assistant under Butch Davis in 1998. He left to spend three seasons at Rutgers, then returned to Miami as an assistant coach from 2004-06.

First for Purdue: No. 1 in AP poll



Purdue is No. 1 in The AP men's college basketball poll for the first time. The Boilermakers were a unanimous No. 1 in the poll released Monday to move up from No. 2. Reigning national champion Baylor is now No. 2, with Duke, UCLA and Gonzaga rounding out the top five. Purdue (8-0, 1-0 Big Ten) reached No. 2 in consecutive seasons under Gene Keady from 1986-88 and matched its previous high last week, receiving nine first-place votes from a 61-person media panel. The Boilermakers routed Florida State last week and opened Big Ten play with a 77-70 win over Iowa on Friday, sliding into the top spot after previous No. 1 Duke lost to an unranked Ohio State squad that is now No. 21. Until this week, Purdue had the second-most appearances in the AP poll — 379 weeks — for a school that had never been ranked No. 1 (Maryland, 434 weeks). The Boilermakers are winning by an average of 25.6 points per game, the closest being the seven-point win over Iowa. “You want to get in close games and win them,” Purdue coach Matt Painter, above, said. “It really helps you through the season.”

'19 US Open champ taking a break



Bianca Andreescu, the 2019 U.S. Open champion, will take a mental break from tennis and sit out the start of next season, including the Australian Open, saying Monday she wants to “re-set, recover, and grow” after a challenging two years that included getting COVID. The 21-year-old from Canada wrote on Twitter that she was affected mentally and physically by “multiple weeks quarantining” and that her grandmother's stay in a hospital's intensive care unit because of the coronavirus “really hit me hard.” “A lot of days, I did not feel like myself. I felt like I was carrying the world on my shoulders,” Andreescu, above, said. “I could not detach from everything that was going on off the court; was feeling the collective sadness and turmoil around and it took its toll.” Andreescu joins other athletes who have cited the need for time away from competition to gather themselves mentally — including four-time Grand Slam winner Naomi Osaka, who took a break after pulling out of the French Open in May and again after her loss at the U.S. Open in September and sat out the remainder of the season. —AP



U.S. athletes will compete in the 2022 Beijing Olympics despite a diplomatic boycott announced by the White House on Monday. NG HAN GUAN/AP

OLYMPICS

It's not 'business as usual'

US to stage diplomatic boycott of Beijing '22 Winter Games

By Aamer Madhani and Alexandra Jaffe
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. will conduct a diplomatic boycott of the upcoming Winter Olympics in Beijing to protest Chinese human rights abuses, the White House confirmed Monday, a move that China has vowed to greet with “firm countermeasures.” White House press secretary Jen Psaki said U.S. athletes will continue to compete and will “have our full support,” but added “we will not be contributing to the fanfare of the games.” “U.S. diplomatic or official representation would treat these games as business as usual in the face of the PRC's egregious human rights abuses and atrocities in Xinjiang, and we simply can't do that,” Psaki told reporters during Monday's briefing. “We have a fundamental commitment to promoting human rights. And we feel strongly in our position and we will continue to take actions to advance human rights in China and beyond,” Psaki added. The announcement came as Biden prepares to host a White House Summit for Democracy, a virtual gathering of leaders and civil society experts from more than 100 countries that is set to take place Thursday and Friday. The administration has said Biden intends to use the meeting “to announce both individual and collective commitments, reforms, and initiatives to defend democracy and human rights at home and abroad.” Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Robert Menendez, D-N.J., called such a diplomatic boycott “a neces-

sary step to demonstrate our unwavering commitment to human rights in the face of the Chinese government's unconscionable abuses.” He called on “other allies and partners that share our values to join with the United States in this diplomatic boycott.” Sen. Tom Cotton, an Alabama Republican, however, said the diplomatic boycott amounted to a “half measure.” American officials, including Biden, have criticized Beijing for human rights abuses against Uyghurs in northwest Xinjiang province, suppression of democratic protests in Hong Kong, military aggression against the self-ruled island of Taiwan and more. President Donald Trump's administration in its final days declared the abuses in northwest China “genocide.” “The United States should fully boycott the Genocide Games in Beijing,” Cotton said. “American businesses should not financially support the Chinese Communist Party and we must not expose Team USA to the dangers of a repugnant authoritarian regime that disappears its own athletes.” Psaki wouldn't comment whether Biden weighed pulling athletes from the games — many of whom have been training for years for the moment to compete on the global stage. In 1980, in the midst of the Cold War, Jimmy Carter kept U.S. athletes home from the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow to protest the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. “I don't think that we felt it was the right step to penalize athletes who have been training and preparing for this moment, and we felt that we could send a clear message by not sending an official U.S. delegation,” Psaki said. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian accused U.S. politicians of grandstanding over the issue of not sending dignitaries to attend events that China

hopes will showcase its economic development and technological prowess. Speaking to reporters at a daily briefing, Zhao said such a move would be an “outright political provocation,” but gave no details on how China might retaliate. Human rights advocates and lawmakers in the U.S. who support a boycott say it's a necessary step. They cite China's poor record on human rights as justification, saying China is using the games to whitewash its ill treatment of civil rights activists, political dissidents and ethnic minorities. “Without being invited, American politicians keep hyping the so-called diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Olympics, which is purely wishful thinking and grandstanding,” Zhao told reporters at a daily briefing. “If the U.S. side is bent on going its own way, China will take firm countermeasures.” The International Olympic Committee in a statement called the decision to keep dignitaries away from the game a “political decision for each government” that it “fully respects.” “... This announcement also makes it clear that the Olympic Games and the participation of the athletes are beyond politics and we welcome this,” the IOC statement said. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who had been advocating for a diplomatic boycott for months, applauded Biden for taking the step. The dispatching of high-level delegations to each Olympics has long been a tradition among the U.S. and other leading nations. Then-President George W. Bush attended the opening of the 2008 Beijing Summer Games. First lady Jill Biden led the American contingent to the Summer Olympics in Tokyo this year. Psaki said Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping didn't discuss a potential diplomatic boycott of the games when they spoke last month.

NFL ANALYSIS

Bet on this: Gambles get second looks

By Barry Wilner
Associated Press

John Harbaugh has the best kicker in the NFL, currently and possibly ever. Yet, trailing by one point, he left Justin Tucker on the sideline Sunday and went for a 2-point conversion in the dying seconds against the Steelers. Lamar Jackson didn't quite have enough touch on his pass to an open Mark Andrews, and the Ravens (8-4) fell 20-19 to the Steelers. The road loss dropped the Ravens from the overall lead in the AFC. It seemed one of the stranger decisions of a strange NFL season. But Harbaugh, one of the league's best coaches, quickly explained his reasoning. “We tried to win the game right there. We were pretty much out of corners at that point in time,” Harbaugh said without noting that the Ravens secondary has been leaky all season no matter who's playing. “It was an opportunity for us to win the game right there.” Considering the versatility of Jackson, it probably was a strong opportunity. But the one item not a major part of Jackson's bag of tricks is the finesse pass, which is what this play called for. “You saw the play. It's that close,” Harbaugh said. “It's a game of inches. ... That's football. It's just that close.” As is the entire AFC race. The Ravens' decision surprised its archrivals. And didn't. “I was a little surprised because I ran off the field,” said defensive end Cam Heyward, who isn't on special teams. “But we called the timeout, bought me an extra couple of seconds. At first, I thought (Andrews) scored, because he had it in his hand and then dropped it. But I mean, it's just one or two plays that go your way.” Harbaugh's gamble was in character, according to Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger, who has gone up against the Ravens coach for nearly 14 seasons. And who's to say the Ravens would have won a coin toss to start overtime, marched downfield and scored a touchdown to end it without putting their secondary on the field? But the decision brings into focus just how difficult crunch time can be for coaches. There's no accepted manual on how to manage such situations. Many times, the gut feeling is the best approach. Unfortunately, very few head coaches have the, well, guts to go with their gut. Far too many of them coach not to lose rather to win. Is there anything more frustrating than watching your team go into the prevent defense? Cliche warning: All the prevent defense does is prevent you from winning. See what happened in Detroit. In pretty much handing the Lions (1-10-1) their initial victory of the season, the Vikings (5-7) went into such a defensive shell late, and the offense-challenged Lions went 75 yards in 1:50 to win 29-27. Without a timeout. Jared Goff threw an 11-yard touchdown pass to Amon-Ra St. Brown just beyond the goal line as time expired — with the Vikings defensive backs far too deep in the end zone. The Vikings' three-man rush backfired big time. “In hindsight, we would have loved to have gotten more pressure on him,” coach Mike Zimmer said of Goff. “but ... I thought we needed more people in coverage than we did up front. Obviously, that didn't work.” It very often doesn't. The lesson? It hurts more to be passive and lose than to be super aggressive and lose. “Honestly if we would've converted the 2-point conversion we would've been having a different conversation right now,” said Ravens linebacker Josh Byrnes. “Let's be real. We'd be talking about how we found a way to win.”

AP writers Will Graves and Larry Lage, and freelancers Dave Hogg and Dan Scifo contributed.

